

THE
THEBAID
OF
STATIUS,
TRANSLATED INTO
ENGLISH VERSE,
WITH
NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS.

VOL. II.

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INDIGNANT now, th' ethereal King survey'd
The *Theban* War by fun'ral Games delay'd,
And shook his Head, beneath the moving God
From Pole to Pole the starry Regions nod,
And *Atlas*, with unwonted Weight opprest, 5
To the great Author of the Shock addrest
His just Complaint.—To *Maia*'s winged Son
In awful Tone th' Almighty thus begun.
Cyllenius, mount the Winds and speed thy Flight
With swift Descent from Heav'n's imperial Height. 10
To where in Air the *Thracian* Domes arise,
And fair *Calysto* binds the northern Skies,

v. 1. *Indignant now*] *Statius* has here manifested his Belief of one supreme almighty Being, whom he introduces with a Dignity and Superiority suiting his Character and Nature. There is a Nobleness in this Description, that would not have disgraced *Virgil* himself; and the stupendous Effects of the *Nod* are finely imagined. But after all, he seems more desirous of making this Deity formidable than amiable. He is just, but his Justice is not tempered with Mercy. We find him the Author of all the Blood shed between the two Nations; he listens to the Imprecations of *Oedipus* and thinking *Mars* too dilatory, sends *Mercury* to him a second Time to rouse him to Battle by Dint of Threats.

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On Clouds and Dews celestial feeds her Beams,
And shuns old Ocean's interdicted Streams :
And, whether *Mars*, upon his Spear reclin'd, 15
Respires from Toil, or wroth with human Kind,
Pursues the War near *Hebrus*' freezing Flood,
And wantons in a Sea of kindred Blood,
To him our Wrath in our own Terms exp'res,
Nor, cautious of offending, aught suppress : 20
Long since he was enjoin'd by my Commands
To range in Arms the *Greek* and *Theban* Bands,
And kindle Discord on th' *Inachian* Shore,
And where the thund'ring Waves of *Malea* roar.
See ! fun'ral Rites th' *Argolic* Youth detain 25
Just on the Confines of their own Domain.
They act like Conquerors, such Shouts arise
At Intervals between the Sacrifice.
O *Mars* ! is this a Sample of thy Rage ?
See ! in far other Contests they engage : 30
Oebalian Gantlets clash, and with a Bound
The rising Quoits aloft in Air resound.
But, if the cruel Horrors of the Fight
Are still his Joy, and give his Soul Delight,
Let him, averse to Covenant and Truce, 35
With Fire and Sword the guiltless Town reduce
To Ruins, slaughter in the Act of Pray'r,
Exhaust the World, and lay Creation bare.
But now perverse, and heedless of his Sire,
He quits the Strife, and moderates his Ire. 40
Yet let him speedily our Will obey,
And urge the *Grecian* Warriors to the Fray ;
Else (not to treat him worse) I change his Kind,
And break the savage Nature of his Mind :

His

His Sword and Courser else he must restore; 45
 And claim the Right of kindred Blood no more.
Tritonia will suffice to the Command,
 And all besides shall as Spectators stand.
 He said: the swift-wing'd Herald sallies forth,
 And to the frozen Climates of the North 50
 Pursues his Course. Before the polar Gate
 Storms, Show'rs, and yawning Winds his Coming wait
 In sable Troops: then down the steepy Way
 The God, distracted in his Flight, convey.
 Thick on his Robe the rattling Hail descends, 55
 And ill the shading Hat his Ears defends.
 With Horror now he casts his Eyes around,
 And views, where on a brazen Tract of Ground

v. 57. *With Horror now*] Lewis Crucius in his Life of this Author, transcribes this Description of Mars's Temple and Palace, as a very fine one: fine however as it is, that in Dryden's *Palamon and Arcite* is not inferior, as the Reader will perceive from a Comparison.

Beneath the low'ring Brow, and on a Bent
 The Temple stood of Mars armipotent:
 The Frame of burnish'd Steel, that cast a Glare
 From far, and seem'd to thaw the freezing Air.
 A strait long Entry to the Temple led,
 Blind with high Walls and Horror over Head:
 Thence issu'd such a Blast, and hollow Roar,
 As threaten'd from the Hinge to heave the Door:
 In through that Door a northern Light there shone;
 T'was all it had, for Windows there were none.
 The Gate was Adamant, eternal Frame!
 Which hew'd by Mars himself, from Indian Quarries came,
 The Labour of a God; and all along
 Tough Iron-Plates were clench'd to make it strong.
 A Tun about was ev'ry Pillar there:
 A polish'd Mirror shone not half so clear.
 There saw I, how the secret Felon wrought,
 And Treason lab'ring in the Traitor's Thought; 75
 And Midwife Time the ripen'd Plot to Murder brought,
 There

Beneath the fronting Height of *Æmus* stood
The Fane of *Mars*, encompass'd by a Wood.

60

There the red Anger dar'd the pallid Fear ;
Next stood Hypocrisy with holy Leer :
Soft smiling, and demurely looking down,
But hid the Dagger underneath the Gown :
Th' assassinating Wife, the Household Fiend,
And far the blackest there, the Traytor-Friend.
On t'other Side there stood Destruction bare ;
Unpunish'd Rapine, and a Waite of War.
Contest with sharpen'd Knives in Cloisters drawn,
And all with Blood bespread the holy Lawn.
Loud Menaces were heard, and foul Disgrace,
And bawling Infamy in Language base ;
Till Sense was lost in Sound, and Silence fled the Place. }
The Slayer of himself yet saw I there,
The Gore, congeal'd, was clotted in his Hair :
With Eyes half clos'd and gaping Mouth he lay,
And grim, as when he breath'd his sullen Soul away.
In Midst of all the Dome, Misfortune fate,
And gloomy Discontent and fell Debate.
And Madness laughing in his ireful Mood,
And arm'd Complaint on Theft, and Cries of Blood.
There was the murder'd Corpse, in Covert laid,
And violent Death in thousand Shapes display'd :
The City to the Soldiers' Rage resign'd :
Successless Wars, and Poverty behind :
Ships burnt in Fight, or forc'd on rocky Shores,
And the rash Hunter strangled by the Boars :
The new-born Babe by Nurses overlaid ;
And the Cook caught within the raging Fire he made.
All Ills of *Mars* his Nature, Flame and Steel,
The gasping Charioteer beneath the Wheel
Of his own Car ; the ruin'd House that falls,
And intercepts her Lord betwixt the Walls :
The whole Division that to *Mars* pertains,
All Trades of Death that deal in Steel for Gains.
Were there, the Butcher, Armourer and Smith,
Who forges sharpen'd Faulchions, or the Scythe.
The scarlet Conquest on a Tow'r was plac'd,
With Shouts, and Soldiers Acclamations grac'd :
A pointed Sword hung threat'ning o'er his Head,
Sustain'd but by a slender Twine of Thread.
There saw I *Mars*'s Ides, the Capitol,
The Seer in vain foretelling *Cæsar*'s Fall ;

The

The Mansion, rear'd by more than mortal Hands,
On Columns fram'd of polish'd Iron stands ;
The well-compacted Walls are plated o'er
With the same Metal : just without the Door
A thousand Furies frown. The dreadful Gleam, 65
That issues from the Sides, reflects the Beam
Of adverse *Phæbus*, and with chearless Light
Saddens the Day, and starry Host of Night.
Well his Attendants suit the dreary Place :
First frantic Passion, Wrath with redd'ning Face, 70
And Mischief blind from forth the Threshold start ;
Within lurks pallid Fear with quiv'ring Heart,
Discord, a two-edg'd Faulchion in her Hand,
And Treach'ry striving to conceal the Brand.
With endless Menaces the Courts resound : 75
Sad Valour in the Midst maintains her Ground,
Rage with a joyful Heart, tho' short of Breath,
And, arm'd with Steel, the gory-vilag'd Death :
Blood, spilt in War alone, his Altars crowns,
And all his Fire is snatch'd from burning Towns. 80

The last Triumvirs, and the Wars they move,
And *Anthony*, who lost the World for love.
These and a thousand more the Fane adorn ;
Their Fates were painted ere the Men were born ;
All copied from the Heav'ns, and ruling Force
Of the red Star, in his revolving Course.
The Form of *Mars* high on a Chariot stood,
All sheath'd in Arms, and gruffly look'd the God ;
Two Geomantic Figures were display'd
Above his Head, a Warrior and a Maid,
One when direct, and one when retrograde. }

I hope none of my Readers, but such as are insensible of the fine Traits of Poesy, will be displeased at this long Quotation ; as setting them together in this Manner is the best Way to shew the Beauties of both Authors ; and nothing is more agreeable to Persons of Taste, than comparing the Flowers of Genius and Fancy.

U

Spoils

Spoils hung around, and gaudy Trophies torn
 From vanquish'd States the vaulted Roof adorn ;
 Fragments of Iron-Gates with Art ingrav'd,
 Vessels half-burnt, or by the Billows stav'd,
 Sculls crush'd by Wheels, or by keen Faulchions cleft, 85
 And Chariots of their Guides and Steeds bereft.
 Nor were the Wounds of War alone express'd,
 For Groans were almost seen to heave the Breast.
 Here grim to View was plac'd the God of Fight,
 So well-dispos'd, that still he was in Sight 90
 From ev'ry Path, that to the Center brought :
 Such was the Work by skilful *Vulcan* wrought,
 Before, by *Sol* betray'd, th' Adulterer ru'd
 His treach'rous Love by vengeful Schemes pursu'd.
 Scarce had *Cyllenius* cast his Eyes around 95
 In Search of the fell Dæmon, when the Ground
 'Gan shake, and *Hebrus'* horned Flood to roar,
 And vex with refluent Waves the *Tbracian* Shore.
 Then, as a Sign of his Approach, the Steeds
 Spring from their Stalls, and beat the trembling Meads ;

v. 96. *When the Ground*] What a dreadful Idea of *Mars* does the Poet imprint on the Imagination of the Reader! — To usher him in with the greater Pomp, the Ground trembles, the River roars, and the Gates of his Palace fly open to receive him. He is represented all covered with Blood; his Chariot, driven by *Bellona*, overturns Trees, Hills of Snow, and every Thing in its Way; and *Mercury*, a Brother Deity, is so daunted at his Appearance, that his very Blood is chilled, and he does not dare deliver *Jove's* Message; nay, the Poet tells us, that God, great as he is, would have some Reverence for him, and recall the Menaces he uttered. — A Painter might form from this Passage the Portrait of *Mars* in all his Terrors, as successfully as *Phidias* drew that of *Jupiter* from *Homēr's* Description of him in the first Book of the *Iliad*. — In short, upon the whole, this Representation is so grand and full, that nothing can exceed it, but that of the same Deity in the third Book of this Author.

The

The Gates of Adamant, eternal Frame !
 Flew open. Soon as the Destroyer came,
 High in his Car, and grac'd with hostile Gore :
 The Wheels, swift-rolling, dash'd the Meadows o'er
 With crimson Drops ; where'er he pour'd along, 105
 The Forests and deep Snows give Way.—A Throng
 Laden with Spoils, succeeds. *Bellona* steers
 The Chariot's Course, and plies her ashen Spears.
 All cold and stiff with Terror *Hermes* grew,
 And turns his Eyes from the terrific View. 110
 E'en *Jove* himself might soften his Demands,
 And spare his Threats.—While mute *Cyllenius* stands ;
 The God, preventing his Confusion, cries :
 What News from *Jove*? what Orders from the Skies ?
 For scarce; unless some Pow'r thy Will controuls,
 For this bleak Clime beneath the northern Poles
 Woud'st thou resign the sweet *Lycean* Vales,
 And *Mænalo*s, refresh'd by Summer Gales.
 His Sire's Injunctions known, without Delay
 Great *Mars* impells along the dreary Way 120
 His Horses, panting yet with recent Toils,
 And fires the *Greeks* with Hopes of promis'd Spoils.
 This seen, the Cloud compeller half resign'd
 His Wrath, and gentlier now his Face declin'd.

v. 99. *The Steeds*] The seeing of a Horse in a foreign Country before any other Object of the animal Creation was reckoned by the Antients as an Omen of War. *Aeneas*, in relating his Adventures to *Dido*, tells her that, in *Italy*

Quatuor hic, primum omen, equos in gramine vidi
 Tondentes campum latè, candore nivali.
 Et pater Anchises, bellum, terra hospita, portas.
 Bello armantur equi. Book 3. Verse 537.

Thus, when the weary Blasts of *Eurus* cease, 125
 And leave the Deeps subdu'd, at first the Peace
 Is scarce discern'd, as still the Waves retain
 Their Swell, and heave the Surface of the Main,
 Whilst, unrefresh'd, the Seamen seek their Oars,
 And Cordage, floating to the neighb'ring Shores. 130
 The fun'ral Games, and harmless Contests clos'd,
Adraustus Silence on the Crowd impos'd,
 And pour'd, to glad the royal Infant's Soul,
 A large Libation from the sparkling Bowl :
 Then thus the discontented Shade address'd : 135
 Grieve not, O Babe, in Heav'n supremely blest.
 If each third Year these fun'ral Rites shall see,
 So may not *Pelops* seek with greater Glee
 Th' *Arcadian* Altars, nor with Iv'ry Hand
 Insult the Temples on th' *Elæan* Strand ; 140
 So may not *Corinth*, nor the *Delphic* Coast
 Superior Fame, and prouder Honours boast.
 We deem thee more than mortal, and deny
 That *Styx* confines a Member of the Sky.
 Here end thy Rites : but shou'd our Vows be crown'd,
 And haughty *Thebes* lie level with the Ground ;
 A splendid Fane, and Altars shall be thine,
 And white-rob'd Priests with holy Pomp inshrine
 Thy sacred Ashes : nor shall *Greece* alone 150
 Through all her Cities make thy Godhead known,
 But *Thebes* to thy Divinity appeal,
 And swear by thy dread Name with awful Zeal.

v. 138. *So may not Pelops, &c.*] The Sense of this Paraphrase is,
 ' May neither the *Pythian*, *Olympic* nor *Isthmian*, Games excel those
 ' instituted in Honour of thee, O Babe.'

Thus

Thus spoke the Chief for all his Host. The rest
In silent Motions their Assent express'd.

Mean Time the God of Battle urg'd his Car 155

Down *Ephyra*'s Steep Shores, where seen from far
The well-known Mount with daring Head invades
The Clouds, and either Sea alternate shades.

Then Terror, dearest of his menial Train,
He sends as Harbinger, nor sends in vain ; 160
Since none can on our Fear so well impose,
And specious Lyes with more Success disclose.

His Aspect varies, as the Fiend commands,
Unnumber'd are his Tones of Speech, and Hands.
Whether th' Existence of two Suns he feigns, 165

Or subterraneous Motions of the Plains,
Whole Forests shifting Place, and Planets hurl'd
From their own Spheres, to gild the nether World,
Such is his Talent, that he still deceives,
And the gull'd Dotard all alike believes. 170

He calls forth all his Art to raise a Cloud
Of seeming Dust, and awe the tim'rous Crowd.
The Chiefs, astonish'd, from the Mountain's Brow
Beheld it mounting o'er the Fields below.

To double ev'ry Fear, and spread th' Alarms, 175
He mimics thund'ring Steeds, and clashing Arms ;

v. 157. *The well-known Mount*] This was a Mountain in the Peloponnesian Isthmus, called *Acrocorinthus*, i. e. the highest Part of Corinth. *Ephyra* is an Island adjoining.

v. 159. *Then Terror*] Mars is now preparing to obey Jupiter's Commands by terrifying the Confederates with a false Account of the Theban Army : but all this is told us poetically ; and agreeably to the Spirit of the *Epopœia*, Terror becomes a Person, and speaks and acts as an Attendant of Mars. This allegorical Personification is the strongest Proof of a fertile Imagination, and the very *Ζων ταχη* of heroic Poesy.

Then with delusive Shrieks he grates their Ears,
And with false Clamours shakes the solid Spheres.
At this with sudden Dread the Vulgar start,
A Pulse unusual flutt'ring at their Heart: 180
Terror may mock us with imagin'd Cries :
But can it cheat at once our Ears and Eyes ?
See what a Dust ! — the *Thebans* these ? — tis so.
They come : such is the Boldness of the Foe.
But why this Stand ? — we'll first discharge our Vows, 185
And close the Rites. — Thus they. The Terror grows,
A thousand diff'rent Shapes the Monster took,
And varied at his Will his Voice and Look.
Now the *Pisæan* Mode of Dres's he wears ;
And then a Suit of *Pylian* Armour bears : 190
Or in the *Spartan* Phrase, t'augment their Fear,
Swears by the Gods, the *Theban* Host is near.
All passes with the Crowd for genuine Truth,
And gains Belief from hoary Age and Youth.
But, when on Whirlwinds borne, the direful Tale 195
He wafts around, and brooding o'er the Vale
Thrice shakes his sounding Shield, thrice smites his
Steeds,
And lifts the Lance that flames o'er all the Meads,
Arms, Arms they shout, and no Decorum known,
Take up another's Weapons for their own. 200
In borrow'd Coats of Mail, and Casques they shine,
And to their Comrades' Car their Coursers join.
In ev'ry Breast Impatience to engage,
And Lust of Slaughter reigns. Nought checks their
Rage ;
But on they speed, aud fir'd with Thirst of Praise, 205
By present Haste redeem their past Delays.

Such

Such is the Tumult, when indulgent Gales
 Blow from the Strand, and fill the spreading Sails,
 Before the Blast the gaudy Vessel flies,
 The Port rolls back, and lessens to their Eyes. 210

Now on the Surface of the Deep their Oars,
 And Anchors float: while the deserted Shores,
 And Comrades left behind their Eyes pursue,
 Till all is lost, and vanish'd from their View.

When vine-crown'd Bacchus ey'd the *Grecian* Throng,
 As, flush'd with martial Heat, they post along,
 He turn'd his Eyes on *Thebes*, and inly groan'd,
 For much his native City he bemoan'd.

A Look, expressive of his Grief he wore;
 The purple Chaplets grac'd his Hair no more. 220
 Th' untasted Clusters from his Horns he shook,
 And the wreath'd Spear his better Hand forsook.
 Divested of his Robes, before the Throne
 Of *Jove*, who pref's'd by chance the Pole alone,
 In all the Negligence of Woe he stands, 225
 And, suppliant, thus bespeaks with lifted Hands

v. 215 *When vine-crown'd Bacchus*] If *Venus* in *Virgil* pleads for the *Trojans*, *Bacchus* here intercedes for his native City, *Thebes*, and *Statius* has given *Jupiter* the same tender Regard for him, as in the *Aeneid* he discovers for *Venus*. From *Jupiter*'s Answer to *Bacchus* on this Occasion, compared to what he says elsewhere, it appears, that *Jupiter* himself was subject to the Laws of Fate: but, in Reality, these are found to be no other than the fixed and immutable Determinations of his own Will. Here he tells that God, he does not act in Compliance to *Juno*'s Caprice, but conformable to the unalterable Order of Destiny. But in the Beginning of the *Thebaid*, we find him positively declaring to the Gods in Council, his Resolution of destroying the royal Families of *Thebes* and *Argos*, as a Punishment for their Crimes: and, perhaps, the Fate of the Stoicks themselves was no other than this in Reality. Lew. Crucius.

His gracious Sire, who well the Causes knew,
Nor starts astonish'd at th' unwonted View.
Say, Father of the Gods, wilt thou destroy
Thy *Thebes*? can none but vengeful Schemes employ
Thy Confort's Thoughts? and does no Pity move
In our Behalf the tender Breast of *Jove*?
We grant, that erst it griev'd thee to the Soul
To dart thy Light'nings from the cloudy Pole:
Yet why dost thou renew thy bitter Ire, 235
And threat thy late-lov'd Town with Sword and Fire?
No Promises, nor Oaths thy Faith engage.
Alas! where wilt thou bound thy causeless Rage?
Is this a Proof of thy parental Love?
Yet gentler far to the *Parrhasian Grove*, 240
Argos and *Leda*'s Dome thou didst repair,
For then a Virgin's Conquest was thy Care.
Is *Bacchus* then of all thy num'rous Line
The last, who merits thy Regard divine?
Bacchus, whom in far happier Days of Yore 245
(A pleasing Load) the Cloud-compeller bore,

v. 340 *To the Parrhasian Grove*] *Calysto* was ravished by *Jupiter* in this Grove. *Argos* was the Place, where that God imposed upon *Danae* in the Form of a Shower of Gold. *Leda* was debauched by the same God in the Similitude of a Swan.

v. 243, *Is Bacchus then?*] *Lactantius* informs us, that *Bacchus* complains of his being so often neglected by Mortals, as by *Lycurgus* and *Pentheus*. To corroborate this Assertion, he has cited a long Passage from *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, where *Pentheus* is introduced reviling *Bacchus*. But this is a wrong Construction; and the Sense of

Scilicet è cunctis ego neglectissima natis
Progenies.

is, *I then am to be the most slighted of all your Sons*, i. e. by you.

v. 246. *(A pleasing Load) the Cloud-compeller*] When *Semele* was blasted by the Lightning of her Lover, *Bacchus*, with whom she was then

And fondly prov'd a Mother's keenest Throes,
To usher into Life, and future Woes.

Yet more.—The *Thebans* are unskill'd in Arms,
Rude and unexercis'd in War's Alarms; 250

My martial Discipline alone they know :
To weave the leafy Garland for the Brow,
And frame their Motions to the Pipe.—Can they
Who dread the wreathed Lance, and female Fray,
Sustain the Trumpet's Sound?—See furious *Mars*! 255

What Feats he meditates, what wasteful Wars!
How would'st thou rage, should he to Combat lead
And force the *Cretans* to th' embattel'd Mead?
A Tool was wanting, 'till entic'd by thee,
Argos must execute thy stern Decree. 260

Tis this Reflexion that augments our Woes,
We fall but to enrich our *Argive* Foes.

I yield : but whither shall we now translate
The Rites mysterious of our ruin'd State?

And what the pregnant Mother left behind, 265
More happy, had she been less fair and kind?
Shall I sue prostrate at the *Thracian's* Feet,
Or seek in conquer'd *Ind* a safe Retreat?
O grant thy wand'ring Son a peaceful Dome.

At the Request of *Sol* no longer roam 270

then pregnant, was taken from her Womb, and sewed up in *Jupiter's* Thigh.

geneticis ab alvo
Eripitur, patroque tener (si credere dignum est)
Insuitur femori, maternaque tempora complet.

v. 267 *At the Thracian's Feet.*] *Lycurgus*, King of *Thrace*, caused most of the Vines of his Country to be rooted up: hence the Poets have feigned, that he fought with, and persecuted *Bacchus*.

v. 270. *At the Request of Sol*] *Venus* upbraids *Jupiter* of his Partiality in like Manner,

The *Delian* Rocks, but girt with Waves, unite,
Nor envy I the happier God of Light.

Minerva from her Citadel belov'd
Th' Invasions of the Surge with Ease remov'd.

Great *Epaphus*, (as oft these Eyes have view'd) 275
Gives Laws to *Egypt* by his Arm subdu'd.

Nor *Cretan Ida*, nor *Cyllene* care,
What hostile Deeds the neighb'ring States prepare.

Alas ! in what then can our Rites offend ?

Here (since in vain Resistance we pretend) 280
Here didst thou revel in *Alcmena*'s Arms,

Here fair *Antiope* resign'd her Charms
With eager Gust, and here *Europa* play'd

The Wanton, by thy specious Form betray'd.

Desert not then the guiltless Race, that springs 285
From thee, the Father of the *Theban* Kings.

At this invidious Speech th' Almighty smil'd,
And, gently raising from the Ground his Child,
As on his Knees he su'd with lifted Hands,

Embrac'd, and kindly answers his Demands. 290

Think not, O *Bacchus*, that the War's design'd
To glut with Slaughter *Juno*'s vengeful Mind.

Antenor potuit, mediis elapsus Achivis,
Illyricos penetrare sinus, atque intima tutus
Regna Liburnorum, & fontem superare Timavi ;
Unde per ora novem vasto cum murmure montis, &c.

v. 287. *At this invidious Speech*] Jupiter's Behaviour to *Venus* after her addressing him may be compared with this to *Bacchus*.

Olli subridens hominum sator atque Deorum,
Vultu, quo cœlum tempestateisque serenat,
Oscula libavit natæ : dehinc talia fatur ;

Aeneid. 1. 258.

We

We act in Concert with the Fates Decree:
 To fall in Battel was their Destiny.
 Peace is my sole Delight: who seeks it more, 295
 Or spills with such Reluctance human Gore?
 Witnes, thou conscious Pole, and starry Hall,
 How oft, when mortal Crimes for Vengeance call,
 I lay the ready Bolt aside, how rare
 My challeng'd Thunders roar, my Lightnings glare. 300
 Scarce could I to the Wrath of injur'd *Mars*,
 And *Dian*, exercis'd in silvan Wars,
 The *Lapithæ*, and *Calydon* resign,
 Tho' both had long defy'd the Rage divine.
 Mine is the Loss and Toil to re-indue 305
 So many Souls with Life, and frame anew.
 On *Argos* and her Peer in Guilt too late
 I execute th' impartial Will of Fate.
 To wave the Sins of *Greece* in ancient Times,
 Thou know'st, how prone the *Thebans* are to Crimes. 310
 Thee to, — But since 'twas done in Days of Yore,
 And we forgive, I pass the Trespass o'er.
 No Joys incestuous hapless *Pentheus* knew,
 No Brothers he begot, no Sire he flew;
 Yet still dismember'd, he resign'd his Breath, 315
 And met an undeferv'd, untimely Death.

v. 303. *The Lapithæ and Calydon*] See Book the first for an Account of *Diana's* Enmity to the *Calydonians*. The *Lapithæ* were a People of *Thessaly*, inhabiting that Part of the Country that lay between the Mountains *Pindus* and *Othrys*. For an Account of the Combat betwixt them and the *Centaurs*. See *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Lib. 12.

v. 313. *No Joys incestuous hapless Pentheus knew.*] *Pentheus* was torn in Pieces by the Priestesses of *Bacchus*, for not attending the sacred Rites of that Deity.

With better Grace thy Sorrow then had flow'd,
 Nor had thy Eloquence been ill bestow'd.
 Nor will the *Thebans* suffer Punishment,
 Tho' well deserv'd, for Crimes that I resent. 320
 Heav'n, Earth, and Piety expell'd with Scorn,
 And Nature's sacred Bonds asunder torn,
 And broken Faith, and e'en the Friends conspire
 Their Fall.—But thou desist to tempt our Ire,
 Secure, that a long Interval remains 325
 Ere we fulfill on *Thebes*, what Fate ordains,
 A new Avenger in a better Age
 Shall rise: first *Argos* bleeds beneath our Rage.
 This heard, the God his wonted Look resumes,
 And with fresh Youth, and new-born Graces blooms.
 Thus parch'd by sultry Suns and southern Gales,
 The pale Rose fades, and withers in the Vales;
 But if soft Zephyr fans the glowing Day,
 And tempers with his Wings the scorching Ray,
 Its Blush revives, the Buds shine forth again,
 And waft the Scent thro' *Flora*'s fair Domain.
 Mean while, their March explor'd, the Scout returns;
 From whom *Eteocles*, astonish'd, learns,
 That near the Confines of the *Theban* Sway
 The Grecian Hosts advance, and speed their Way, 340

v. 331. *Thus parch'd by sultry Suns*] Ariosto has a Simile that very
 much resembles this of our Author.

Qual sotto il più cocente ardore estivo,
 Quando di ber piu desiosa è l' erba,
 Il fior, ch' era vicino a restar privo
 Di tutto quell' umor, ch'in vita il serba,
 Sente l'amata pioggia, esì fa vivo;

Orlando furioso, Canto 23. Stan. 108.

And

And all, who view the Numbers of the Foe,
 To vanquish'd *Thebes* portend approaching Woe.
 Of ev'ry Chief he soon is taught the Name,
 His Birth, his Quality, and martial Fame,
 The prudent King dissembles well his Fears, 345
 And hates the Message, yet attentive hears :
 His Host he now inspits and demands
 A faithful List of all his able Bands.
 By *Mars* excited to the deathful Field,
Aonia, *Pbocis*, and *Eubæa* yield 350
 Their Youth: for thus the Ruler of the Skies
 Decreed. Thro' all the Host the Signal flies.
 Now rang'd for War, and sheath'd in radiant Arms,
 Forth pour the Squadrons at the first Alarms,
 And take the Field, which next the City lay, 355
 Thirsting for Blood, and destin'd for the Fray.
 Before th' expected Foe was yet in Sight,
 The Matrons climb the Walls to view the Fight;
 And teach, whilst to their Sons their Sires they shew,
 Their little Hearts with early Warmth to glow. 360
 The Senior-Princess on a Turret stood,
 Veil'd from the public Eye. A sable Hood

v. 361. *The Senior-Princess*] *Statius* has also imitated *Homer* in many Places; and he seems particularly to have had an Eye to *Helen*'s informing the old Men on the Walls of *Troy*, as she is there described in the *Iliad*, of the Character of the several Princes in the Grecian Camp; for in the seventh Book, *Antigone*, Sister to *Eteocles* and *Polynices* appears standing on a Tower, attended by an old Officer who had been *Laius*'s Armour-bearer; who, at her Desire, gives an Account of the Allies that came to assist the *Thebans*. Though some Circumstances are altered, it is very easy to imagine he took his Plan from the *Iliad*. Nor will any one condemn this Conduct of his, such Imitations being not only very allowable, but commendable, when made with Art, and happily and fitly introduced.—

Lewis Crucius.
Lactantius

318. STADIUS'S THEBAID. Book VII.

From the keen Air her tender Cheeks defends :

Phorbas alone of all her Train attends,

The Squire of *Laius*, whilst at *Thebes* he reign'd, 365

And in the royal Service still retain'd.

Him fair *Antigone* with kind Demand

Thus questions. May we hope to make a Stand

Against our Enemies, since all the States

Of *Greece* descend to Fight, as Fame relates. 370

I pray thee, first inform me of the Name

Of our Confed'rates, and what Rank they claim ?

For well I see what Armour *Creon* wears,

What are the Standards our *Menœceus* bears,

And how fierce *Hæmon* tow'rs above the rest, 325

A brazen Sphinx well-imag'd on his Crest.

Thus spake the Fair unknowing. He replies :

Yon Chief, whose warlike Figure strikes your Eyes,

Is *Dryas*. From *Tanagra*'s Hill he leads

A thousand Archers, train'd to warlike Deeds. 380

The great *Orion*'s Offspring he : behold

The Bolt and Trident, rudely form'd in Gold

Upon his Shield.—Nor do his Acts disgrace

Th' untainted Honours of his godlike Race.

From him, ye Gods, avert th'inver'rate Ire 385

Of stern *Diana*, fatal to his Sire !

Laetantius observes, that in this Account of the Generals who took Part with *Thebes*, and the Provinces they commanded, our Author has adhered pretty close to *Homer*'s Catalogue, so far as regards the Geography, and Epithets of Places.—Mr. *Pope* strengthens this Remark. See *Iliad*, Lib. 2.

v. 386. *Fatal to his Sire*] The fabulous Account of this Hero is as follows.—*Pelasgus*, a pious Worshipper of the Gods hospitably entertained *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, and *Mercury*, for which Favour they they promised to grant him whatsoever he wished. Therefore, as he had no Issue, he requested, that they would grant him a Son. The Gods promised they would ; and pissing on the Hide of an Ox that he

BOOK VII. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 319

Ocaleæ, Medeon, Nysa stock'd with Groves,
And *Thisbe*, fam'd for *Cytherea's* Doves,
March to the Fight beneath his royal Care,
And to his Banner, unconstrain'd, repair.

390

Next comes *Eurymedon*: the Weapons born
By *Faun*, his rustic Sire, one Hand adorn,
A Crest of Pine-leaves trembles on his Head:
The savage Race his massy Javelin dread,

Nor less is his Desert in Arms, I ween;

395

With him *Erythrae*, rich in Flocks, is seen,
Who *Scolos*, and the Coasts of *Hyle* till,
Who *Eteonos*, rough with many a Hill,
And *Schænos*, *Atalanta's* Birth-place, hold,

In Manners haughty, as in Combat bold.

400

The Lance of Ash *Pellæan*, and the Shield,
Impenetrable by the Dart they wield.

See, with what Clamours the *Neptunian* Throng,
The Natives of *Onchestus*, pour along!

he had just sacrificed to them, ordered him to dig a Hole for it in the Earth, and take it out at the End of nine Months. He did so, and found on it the Child, whom he afterwards named *Orion*, from οὐρα, which signifies *Urine*. When *Orion* grew up to Man's Estate, he attempted to ravish *Diana*, who, imploring the Assistance of the Earth, was delivered by a Scorpion, that stung the Ravisher to Death. Others say, that he was slain by the Shafts of that Goddess, as *Horace*.

Virgineâ domitus sagittâ.

v. 399. *Atalanta's Birth-place*] There were two Ladies of this Name; one an *Arcadian* Queen, the Mother of *Parthenopæus*, and the other (who is here meant) of *Scyros*. She was overcome in a Foot-Race by *Hippomanes*, who threw in her Way three golden Apples, which *Venus* had given him for that Purpose.

v. 401. *The Lance of Ash Pellæan*] *Lucan* mentions this Sort of Weapon, and particularizes it, as well as our Author, by the Name of *Sarissa*.

Primi Pellæas arcu fregere Sarissas.

Whom

Whom *Mycalissos* shades with lofty Pines, 405
 Where, as a Mirror clear, *Gargaphye* shines,
 Thy Streams, O *Melus*, lov'd of *Pallas*, rise,
 And *Heliartos* views with envying Eyes
 The Fruit of *Ceres*, and, as it ascends,
 With the young Blades his noxious Herbage blends. 410
 Their Shields are Bark. Huge Trunks supply the Place
 Of Spears. A Lion's Hide o'erspreads their Face.
 These, as they want a Monarch of their own,
Amphion (by the Damsel not unknown)
 Conducts to War. The Badges of the Realm, 415
 A Bull and Lyre are wrought upon his Helm.
 Proceed, brave Youth, to dare the thickest Foes,
 And for our Walls thy naked Breast expose.
 You too, ye Warriors, favour'd of the Nine !
 To yield us Aid forsake the Mount divine. 420
 And thou, O *Olmius*, and *Permessus* blest
 With Streams, whose gentle Murmurs lull to rest
 The weary Shepherd, rouse to Feats of Arms
 Your slothful Sons, averse to War's Alarms.

414. *By the Damsel not unknown.*] I think it is not improper to take Notice, that this Parenthesis is not to be understood as spoken by *Phorbas* to *Antigone*, but by the Author to the Reader. He hints to him, that *Phorbas* is describing a Person to *Antigone*, whom she very well knew ; so that we may fairly conclude, there was some Love-Match in the Case, to which the Poet alludes in this flight Manner.

v. 415. *The Badges of the Realm, a Bull and Lyre*] The Lyre was engraved on the Arms of the *Thebans*, because *Amphion* is said to have built their Town by his Skill in handling that Instrument ; and the Bull was added in Honour of *Cadmus*, who, when he sought his Sister *Europa*, who was ravished by *Jupiter* in the Shape of that Animal, was conducted by an Heifer to the Spot, where he afterwards founded the City of *Thebes*.

In

BOOK VII. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 321

In Strains adapted to their Country's Rite 425
They now exult, and harmonize the Fight.
Thus, when in Spring *Sol* sheds a warmer Ray,
On *Strymon*'s Banks the Swans renew their Lay.
Pursue with Chearfulness this Track to Fame,
Secure, the Muses shall embalm your Name 430
In never-dying Numbers, and convey
To latest Times the Honours of the Fray.
The Princess here broke in, and thus replies.
O Father, hither turn thy aged Eyes,
For sure this Parity of Choice declares 435
That those are Brothers.—Mark, how either wears
The self-same Armour! equal are their Crests:
But say, what Motive thus cements their Breasts.
Were ours as these unanimous and kind!
She ceas'd. The Sage soft smiling, thus rejoin'd. 440
Nor thou, O Queen, hast err'd in this alone:
Many (the real History unknown)
That these are Brethren, have alike believ'd,
By all the Signs of equal Age deceiv'd.
Yet are they Sire and Son, tho' each appears 445
A Brother both in Stature, Form and Years.
Fair *Dircetis*, enamour'd with the Charms
Of *Lapithaon*, snatch'd him to her Arms;

v. 441. *Nor thou, O Queen*] It has been observed of *Statius*, that in his Catalogues he has happily imitated *Homer* and *Virgil*, by keeping up the Dignity of his Stile, and Harmony of his Numbers, and diversifying the Detail with proper Epithets, short Descriptions, and agreeable Narrations from Passages of History and Fable, with which he diverts and refreshes the Reader at due Intervals. Of his Art in this last Article the following Anecdote is a shining Instance; and though it borders upon the marvellous, does not transgres the Licence of Poetry.

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And, forcing Nature, taught the Boy to prove
Th' untimely Joys of undigested Love.

450

Nor was it long, before from their Embrace

Alathreus sprung unmatch'd in Shape and Face.

He deigning not to wait the nat'r'l Time,

O'ertakes his Father in his youthful Prime,

Adopts each Feature, blends their Years in one:

455

And now they change the Name of Sire and Son

For that of Brothers, and unknowing Strife,

Tread Hand in Hand, the chequer'd Path of Life.

With each three hundred Horse to Fight repair,

Who breathe fam'd *Coronia*'s temp'rate Air,

460

And *Glissas*', sacred to the Pow'rs divine,

One for her Corn renown'd, and one for Wine:

Mark *Hypseus*, whose enormous Shield display'd

O'er four tall Steeds extends its ample Shade!

Huge is its Orb, with sev'n Bull-Hides o'ercast:

465

The Cuirass, for its Strength by few surpas'd,

Three Plates of Iron form. His gen'rous Breast

Alone it guards: he fears not for the rest.

His Spear the Glory of the fylvan Reign,

Ne'er baulks its Master's Hopes, nor flies in vain:

470

Thro' obvious Arms and Hearts it takes its Way,

Untaught to brook Resistance and Delay.

Asopus was his Sire (to credit Fame)

A Father then, and worthy of the Name,

When thro' the broken Bridge and ruin'd Mound

475

He roars, and deluges the Plains around,

v. 468. *He fears not for the rest*] *Phorbas* here pays a genteel and artful Compliment to the Valour of *Hypseus*. He tells *Antigone*, that he had no Occasion for any Armour on his Back, because he never turned it to his Enemies.

Or when, to brave the Ruler of the Skies,
In Days of old he bade his Waves arise.
For they report, that whilst his Daughter stray'd
On the green, Bank he forc'd the beauteous Maid. 480
Resenting this (for at that better Time
The Rape of Virgins was no licens'd Crime)
With *Jove* he durst in hardy Fight engage,
And dash'd against the Stars his foamy Rage:
At length, unequal to the triple Fire, 485
He flunk from Combat, and resign'd his Ire.
Yet some small Sparks of Courage still remain ;
For oft in angry Mood upon the Plain
He pours *Ætnæan* Vapours, Badge of Shame,
And Ashes, gather'd from the Light'ning's Flame. 490
The Deeds of *Hypseus* we shall soon approve,
If his fair Sister can but influence *Jove*.
Him as their Chief, *Ithone*'s Troops attend
Ithone, blefs'd with *Pallas* for a Friend.
From *Arne*, *Græa*, *Mide* and the Coast 495
Of *Aulis*, next he leads a banded Host,
With those who exercise their rural Toil
On green *Plateæ*, *Peteon*'s furrowy Soil,
Euripus, ebbing in his Course again,
And thee, *Antbedon*, Verge of our Domain, 500

v. 496. *Aulis*.] A City and Haven of *Bœotia*, where the *Grecians* were detained a long Time by contrary Winds in their Expedition against *Troy*.

v. 499. *Euripus*.] A narrow Sea between *Bœotia* and *Eubœa*, where, according to *Gregory Nazianzen* and *Justin Martyr*, *Aristotle* drowned himself, because he could not discover the Cause of its ebbing and flowing, which was seven Times a Day.

v. 500. *Antbedon*.] A Town situated between *Eubœa* and *Bœotia*. *Glaucus* was a Fisherman, who laying the Fish which he caught, upon the Bank, observed, that by tasting a certain Herb they revived, and

324 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book VII.

Where *Glaucus*, leaping from the grassy Shore,
Plung'd headlong in the Deeps, a Man no more,
And view'd with sudden Terror, as he sprung,
The Fishes, that around his Middle clung.

With *Balearic* Slings they cleave the Wind : 505

Their Javelins leave the swiftest Shaft behind.

Nor had *Narcissus* shun'd the Strife of Arms :
But smitten with his own reflected Charms

In *Thespian* Fields he grows. *Cephaeus* laves
The much-lov'd Flow'ret with his childless Waves. 510

Who can recount the *Phocians* fam'd of old,
The *Phocians*, in *Apollo*'s Host inroll'd ?

Who *Panope* and *Cyparissos* plow,
Or *Lebodea*'s Vales, and *Daulis* sow ?

Hyampolis, on pointed Rocks reclin'd,
And high *Parnassus*, at the Top disjoin'd ? 515

Who thro' the Plains of *Anemoria* rove,

Thro' *Cyrrha*, and the dark *Corycian* Grove ;
And from *Lilaea*'s sea-beat Walls, disspread

With oozy Banks, behold the Fountain-Head 520

Of hoar *Cephaeus*, where the *Pythian* Snake

In the fresh Stream was wont his Thirst to slake.

leaped into the Sea again, which he imitated, and became a God of the Sea.

v. 509. *Cephaeus*] At present, *Cefiso* is a River of *Greece* that disembogues itself into the Gulph of *Negropont*. It rises in the Mountains of *Phocis*, and is stiled sacred by *Lucan*, from the Nearnest of its Springs to the Oracle of *Delphos*. This River was feigned to be the Father of *Narcissus*, whose Story is in every School-boy's Mouth, and therefore needs not to be told here.

v. 513. *Who Panope, &c.*] These Lines are almost a Transcript of those subjoined from *Homer*'s Catalogue. *Il. B. 2.*

οἱ Κυπάρισσον ἔχον, Πυθανός τε πετρίσοσαν,
Κελοσαν τε ζαθέν, καὶ Δαυλίδες καὶ Πανοπῆ,
Οἱ τ' Αιγαίρεισσι, καὶ τοῖς Υαμπολίν αὐφενέμοντο.

Laurels,

I.

Book VII. STADIUS's THEBAID. 325

Laurels, inwoven with their Crests, they wear,
And on their brazen Arms insculptur'd bear
Delos, or *Niobe's* or *Tytion's* Fate, 525
Both sacrific'd to stern *Latonia's* Hate.

These *Iphitus*, a Chief well-known to Fame,
Commands, whose Father, *Naubolus* by Name,
Directed once the Car and Warrior-Steeds
Of *Laius*, noted for his gentle Deeds, 530

What Time (O Scene Heart-wounding to behold !
His Neck, convuls'd with dying Motions roll'd,
And pour'd upon the Ground Life's purple Tide.
O had I shar'd his Fate, and with him dy'd !

While thus he spoke, his Cheeks grew wet with Tears,
And his whole Visage pale and wan appears ; 535
Whilst interrupting Sighs his Voice represt,
And heav'd, as they wou'd rend his swelling Breast.

With lenient Arts his Ward removes his Pain :
His Voice restor'd, he faintly speaks again. 540

O thou, who dost my ev'ry Thought employ,
At once a pleasing Care, and anxious Joy !
For thee I linger on Life's busy Stage,
And drag along the slow Remains of Age,
Too fee perchance thy princely Brothers slain, 545
And *Laius'* Slaughter acted o'er again.

Yet till to some brave Suitor I resign
Thy Virgin-Charms, protract, ye Pow'rs divine,
My vital Thread : that Charge fulfill'd, I give
The Loan of Nature back, and cease to live. 550

v. 555. *Carybos*] Now *Carybo*, an Island bordering on the Straits of *Eubaea*. — *Caphareus* was the Mountain on which many of the Grecian Ships were split in their Return from *Troy*.

But whilst we thus digress the Time away,
 What Leaders pass, unnoticed, to the Fray !
 See *Clonius* with the Seed of *Abas* join'd,
 Whose Hair depends in flowing Locks behind !
 Unsung *Carytos*, stock'd with marble Veins, 555
Capbareus high, and *Aegea*'s Vale remains.
 And now the circling Troops their Chief enclose,
 While Heralds Silence on the Crowd impose.
 Scarce had he said, when from a rising Ground,
 The Monarch thus bespeaks his Bands around. 560
 Ye Warrior-Kings, from whose disposing Hand
 I take the Honours of the chief Command,
 Or midst the vulgar Herd assert my Right,
 Think not, I now exhort you to the Fight,
 Since bound by voluntary Oaths, you lend 565
 Your pow'rful Aid ; nor mean I to commend,
 Since Words can ill express my grateful Sense,
 Nor Thanks requite your Zeal in our Defence.
 Yet shall the Gods your high Desert regard,
 And your own Hands the Victory reward. 570
 No Foe leads hither his assembled Hosts,
 No warlike Pillager from foreign Coasts

v. 561. *Ye Warrior-Kings*] It will be hard to find a more artful Speech than this of *Eteocles* to the auxiliary Kings. He begins with telling them, that he is willing to resign the Command of the Army whenever they require it. He then pays them a genteel Compliment on their Readiness to assist him; and sets this Expedition of his Brother in the worst of Lights by attributing it to the Thirst of Blood, Disaffection to his Parents, and an unnatural Aversion to his native Country.—In short, it is the compleatest Piece of Dissimulation I ever met with. Not the least of his malevolent Disposition transpires, and no one from this Harangue could form an Idea of his true Character.

Prepares

Prepares to sack the Town which you defend,
But a false Native, and pretended Friend.

Here are his Sisters, Mother, aged Sire, 575

And here his Brother was.—See, flush'd with Ire,
His Countrymen in adverse Arms he meets,
And menaces his own paternal Seats.

Yet in my Cause th' *Aonian* Troops engage,
Nor leave me, Monster! to thy ruthless Rage. 580

Whose Will and Sentiments thou should'st have known,
Nor thus aspir'd to my forbidden Crown.

This said, the King disposes all aright,
And orders, who shall take the Field for Fight,
Or guard the City: who shall close the Rear, 585
Compose the Flanks, or in the Van appear.

The Shepherd thus unbars at Break of Day
His Twig-built Folds, and calls the Sheep away.

The Fathers of the Flock in Order lead

The dewy Way, the Mother-Ewes succeed. 590

With careful Hand he tends the teeming Dams,
And carries in his Arms the feeble Lambs.

Mean Time, with Wrath impell'd, the *Grecian* Host

Pursue their March along th' *Aonian* Coast;

From Morn to Night, from Night to Morn again 595

They bend beneath their Armour, and disdain

The Gifts of Sleep, and grudge to set apart

An Hour for Rest, or Food to chear the Heart.

v. 587. *The Shepherd thus*] This Simile, though taken from low Life, admirably well illustrates the parental Care and military Vigilance of *Eteocles*: and with Respect to the Circumstances of it, *Virgil* himself has scarcely in all his Eclogues a finer Piece of rural Imagery.

They seek their Enemies with equal Speed,
 As if pursu'd themselves by Foes ; nor heed 600
 The Prodigies, that, as they pass along,
 Foretell their Fate in many a boding Song.
 The Stars, the Beasts and Birds of Prey disclose
 Destruction ; o'er their Banks the Rivers rose :
 Malignant Lightnings glanc'd along the Poles, 605
 And *Jove*'s own Hand portentous Thunders rolls.
 Spontaneous close the holy Temple-Doors,
 The Shrine with more than mortal Voices roars ;
 Alternate Show'rs of Blood and Stones descend,
 And kindred Shades in weeping Throngs attend. 610
 Then *Cyrrha*'s Oracles respond no more,
Eleusis howls in Months unknown before,
 While in their op'ning Fanes (a sure Presage
 Of future Ills) the *Spartan* Twins engage.
 At Depth of Night (for so th' *Arcadians* tell) 615
Lycaon's frantic Ghost was heard to yell.
Oenomaus renews the Race again,
 And guides the Car o'er *Pisa*'s cruel Plain,
 Whilst *Achelous* weeps his other Horn
 From his dishonour'd Head unjustly torn 620
Mycenæ's iv'ry *Juno* stands in Tears,
 And *Perseus*' Statue vents in Groans its Fears ;
 Old *Inachus* rebellows hoarse and loud,
 And with his Roarings scares the rustic Crowd :

v. 603. *The Stars, &c.*] The Prognostics of the civil Broils between *Cæsar* and *Pompey* are many of them parallel with those preceding the *Theban* War. See *Lucan's Pharsalia*, Book 1 and 7.

v. 616. *Lycaon*'s] *Lycaon* was the Father of *Helice*, who was devoured by *Jupiter*. To revenge the Rape, he served up human Flesh to the Gods at a Banquet, and was therefore turned into an Wolf. See *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Lib. 1.

While

While sad *Palæmon* o'er the double Main 625
 Was notic'd for his Country to complain.
 Th' *Inachians* heard, yet on their Course they steer,
 To heav'nly Counsels deaf, and blind to Fear.
 Now on the Banks of rough *Asopus* stood
 The *Grecian* Wings, and view'd the hostile Flood, 630
 When sudden Doubts forbade them to pass o'er,
 And stay'd their slack'ning Steps upon the Shore.
 The River then by chance with deafning Sound
 Descended on the trembling Fields around ;
 Whether he ow'd his Swell to Mountain-Snow, 635
 Or Show'rs, discharg'd from the celestial Bow,
 Or whether, to detain his daring Foes
 From sacking *Thebes*, spontaneous he arose.
Hippomedon first plunges in his Steed,
 Huge Fragments of the broken Bank succeed : 640
 Then to his Comrades left behind he cries,
 While, bursting o'er his Head, the Waves arise :
 Come on, for thus to *Thebes* I'll shew the Way,
 Nor Walls, nor Gates shall long my Progress stay.

v. 631. *When sudden Doubts*] *Cæsar's* Irresolution and Dread at passing the *Rubicon* are described in a similar Manner by *Lucan*, and the following Lines in particular have a near Resemblance with our Author's.

— Ut ventum est parvi Rubiconis an undas,
 ————— Tunc perculit honor
 Membra ducis, riguere comæ, gressumque coercens
 Langor in extrema tenuit vestigia ripâ.

v. 633. *The River then*] *Statius* might have here introduced a fine Piece of Machinery, and taken the same Advantage of the River *Asopus*, as *Homer* did of *Scamander*, by making it oppose the March of the *Grecians*.— But perhaps it was his Aversion to become an Imitator that made him let slip this Opportunity ; he rather choosing to forego an Ornament than be indebted to another for the Hint of it.

Now

330 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book VII.

Now all rush down, dismiss their former Dread, 645
And blush to follow when they might have led.

Thus when the Herdsman thro' some Brook untry'd
Would drive his Cattle to the farther Side,
Just on the Brink all motionless they stand,
And view the Waves between, and distant Strand: 650
But if the bolder Bull pervades the Ford,
And gains the wish'd-for Mead, its Depth explor'd,
The Leap grows easy, shallower looks the Stream,
And the two Banks almost united seem.

Not distant far a Mountain they survey, 655
And Fields, from whence all *Thebes* in Prospect lay:
Encamping here, they rais'd their Tents and eas'd
Their Limbs, so well the Situation pleas'd.
Beneath an open Tract of Country lies;
No Hills between the Town and them arise, 660
From whose superior Height the curious Foe
Might mark the Motions in their Camp below.
So well had Nature form'd it's ev'ry Part,
That nought remains improveable by Art.

Here Rocks in Form of lofty Bulwarks rose, 665
There hollow Vales a Kind of Trench compose,
A Battlement, self-rais'd, defends each Side.

What more was wanted, their own Hands supply'd,
Till *Sol* retir'd beneath *Hesperian* Seas,
And Sleep impos'd an Interval of Ease. 670

But O what Tongue can speak the wild Affright
Of *Thebes*, when veil'd in Gloom the sleepless Night
Doubles each Terror of the future Fray,
And menaces the near Approach of Day.

They run about the Walls; and in their Fears 675
Amphion's Fortress insecure appears.

Mean

Mean while new Horrors of the Foe arise,
Fame swells their Number, Fear augments their Size..
But when they view the blazing Fires, that show
The *Greian* Tents, from off the Mountain's Brow, 680
Their Warrior-Steeds, and Weapons some exhort,
Others more pious to the Fanes resort,
And tempt the Gods with Sacrifice and Pray'r;
Or in the very Height of their Despair,
Exact a Promise of the burial Rite, 685
And fun'r'al Honours, if they fall in Fight.
Terrific Visions bring to View their Foes,
And deathful Dreams intrude on their Repose.
To lose the Life that's loathsome grown, they fear,
And call for Death, but shun it when 'tis near. 690
In either Camp the Fury takes her Stand,
And brandishes a Snake in either Hand:
The * Chiefs with mutual Hatred she inspires ;
But both against their aged Parent fires :
Sequester'd in a distant Cell he lies, 695
Implores the Fiends, and re-demands his Eyes.
Now fainter shone the silver Lamp of Night,
And the Stars fled before the new-born Light,
When *Sol*, emerging from his watry Bed,
Above the Waves exalts his beaming Head, 700

v. 679. *Fame swells their Number*] *Lucan* has some animated Lines
on the Terrors that *Cæsar*'s Approach caused at *Rome*. *Phar. B. 1.*

Barbaricas sævi discurrere Cæsaris alas :
Ipsam omnes aquilas, collataque signa ferentem,
Agmine non uno, densisque incedere castris.
Nec qualem meminere vident : majorque ferusque
Mentibus occurrit, victoque immanior hoste.

* *Eteocles and Polynices.*

And,

332 STATIUS's THEBAID. Book VII.

And, scatt'ring from his Wheels the Sparks of Day,
 Marks his bright Progress with a golden Ray.
 Lo! from the Gate her Steps *Jocasta* bends,
 And looks the oldest of the Sister Fiends
 In Majesty of Woe. Her Colour flies; 705
 Grey hairs o'erhung her Cheeks and haggard Eyes.
 Black were her Arms: an Olive-Branch she bore,
 With Wool of sable Colour wreathed o'er.
 Her Daughters, now the better Sex, sustain
 The furious Queen, while she exerts in vain 710
 Her aged Limbs, that, destitute of Force,
 Bend with her Weight, and falter in the Course.
 She stands before the *Grecians*, strikes her Breasts
 Against the Gates, and movingly requests
 Access in Terms like these.—Ye hostile Bands, 715
 The guilty Mother of the War demands
 To see her Son, long absent from her Sight,
 Nor asks it as a Favour, but her Right.
 The Troops astounded, tremble at the View,
 But when she spoke, their Fears increase anew. 720
 The King's Consent obtain'd, without Delay
 Through yielding Foes, secure, she takes her Way,
 And, as she first th' *Inachian* Leaders eyes,
 Vents her outragious Grief in horrid Cries.
 Ye Chiefs of *Argos*, to my Eyes disclose 725
 The worst of Children and the worst of Foes;
 O say, beneath what Helm his Visage lies
 Conceal'd, what Arms his well-known Shape disguise.

v. 703. *Lo! from the Gate*] I cannot but fancy, there is a strong Resemblance between the Portraits of *Amata* and *Jocasta*: though the former endeavours to sow the Seeds of War, and the latter to make Peace. The Description of the Interview between the Mother and Son is wrought up to the utmost Height of the Pathos.

While

BOOK VII. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 333

While thus she spake, the summon'd Prince appears ;
Forth bubble from his Eyes the joyful Tears. 730

He clasps her in his Arms, and aw'd with Shame,
Relieves her Pains, and dwells upon her Name.

His Sisters now, his Mother then he tends,
Who thus with Pity just Reproaches blends.

O Partner of *Mycenæ*'s fair Domain ! 735

Why dost thou Tears, and Names respectful feign.

And strain thy odious Mother to thy Breast,
Her tender Bosom by thy Armour press'd ?

Didst thou a wretched Guest and Outlaw rove ?

What Heart's so steely that thou wou'dst not move ? 740

The Troops from far expect thy last Commands,
And many a glitt'ring Sword beside thee stands.

v. 735. *O Partner of Mycenæ's*] This Speech of *Jocasta* breathes very strong of motherly Tenderness and Affection.—She opens it with declaring her Doubts of her Son's Sincerity, then tells him, the Troops are so much at his Command, that they will easily dismiss their Rage, if they know his Inclinations are for Peace. She next reminds him of her Care and Regard for him, and advises him to try his Brother once more, adding at the same Time, that if he persists in withholding the Crown from him, he will then have a good Pretence for commencing Hostilities. She then obviates any Suspicions he might entertain of her Treachery, and ironically prompts him to make him and her Daughters Prisoners. She concludes with an Apostrophe to the *Grecian* Princes, wherein she intreats them to make Peace, and use their Influence with her Son, to reconcile him to his Friends, by telling them what Anxieties their Relations undergo in their Absence.—It is impossible to point out the Beauties of these long Orations, without analysing them in this Manner, and considering their several Objects and Motives separately.

v. 740. *What Heart's so steely, that thou wou'dst not move*] *Jocasta* speaks here interrogatively :—The Sense is, there is no one, but what is either moved with Terror at the approaching Invasion, or with Compassion of your Misfortunes.

Deem

Alas! the Cares that hapless Mothers prove!

Witness, how oft I've wept, ye Pow'rs above.

Yet if thou wilt the Words of Age revere, 745

And to thy Friends' Advice incline thy Ear,

Now, while the Camp is still, as in the Night,

And Piety suspends the dreadful Fight,

I pray thee, as a King of mighty Sway,

But charge thee, as my Son, to speed thy Way 750

To Thebes, and see again thy native Hall,

Before to Vulcan's Rage a Prey it fall.

Once more address thy Brother in my Sight,

And I'll be Judge to ascertain thy Right:

Should he refuse again, he will afford 755

A better Plea to wield again the Sword.

Deem not, that by thy conscious Mother's Aid,

Perfidious Snares are for thy Ruin laid.

Some Sparks of nat'ral Love we still retain;

Such Fears, thy Sire conducting, would be vain. 760

Tis true, I married, and from our Embrace

You sprung, the lasting Badges of Disgrace:

Yet vicious as you are, you share my Love:

I pardon, what I yet must disapprove.

But, if thou dost persist to play the King, 765

A Triumph ready to thy Hands we bring.

Come, tie thy captive Sisters' Hands behind,

And to the Car thy fetter'd Parents bind.

Now to your Shame, O Greeks, my Groans I turn,

For your old Sires, and Babes your Absence mourn.

Such then (believe me) is the secret Dread, 770

That Parents feel, such Tears at home they shed.

If in so short a Time so dear he's grown

To you, by whom his Merits scarce were known,

What

What anxious Thoughts must these my Breasts engage,
These Breasts, the Solace of his tender Age? 776
From *Thracian* Kings such Usage I might bear,
But not from those, who breathe the *Grecian* Air.
Then grant my Wish, and second my Desire,
Or in my Son's Embraces I expire. 780
These pow'rful Words the wrathful Cohorts move,
And all the Mother's virtuous Suit approve:
Whilst on their glitt'ring Shields and Armour flow
The pious Streams of sympathetic Woe,
As when the brindled Monarch of the Wood 785
Beholds the Hunter prostrate and subdu'd,
His Anger past, he takes a greater Joy
To spare the ready Victim, than destroy.
Thus Pity through their Hearts unnotic'd, glides,
And the fell Ardour of Revenge subsides. 790
Before them all the Warrior turns his Face
To meet his loving Mother's kind Embrace,
And tries to yield *Antigone* Relief,
And chace with Kisses fair *Ismene*'s Grief:
While, various Tempests raging in his Mind, 795
Ambition for a Time the Reins resign'd.
He wills to go. *Adrastus* not denies;
When, mindful of past Inj'ries, *Tydeus* cries,
Rather let me address the gen'rous Foe,
Who his experienc'd Faith and Honour know, 800
Though not a Brother.—In this wounded Breast
I bear his Peace and Covenants impress'd.

v. 801. *Though not a Brother*] Nothing could be more aptly contrived to render *Eteocles* odious to his Brother, and consequently to dissuade him from trusting himself in his Hands, than this Reflection.—He observes to *Polynices*, that, though he was so mal-treated by *Eteocles*, he was not his Brother; which is equivalent to saying, that he, who was his Brother, would be used with a much greater Degree of Rigour and Cruelty. Why

336 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book VII.

Why did'st thou not, O gentle Mother-Queen !
 As Judge and Mediatress stand between,
 When the fee'd Guards in nightly Ambush lay ? 805
 Such is the League by which thou wou'dst betray
 Thy Son.—But lead him to yon reeking Mead,
 That still bears Witness to the bloody Deed.
 Yet wilt thou follow ?—Do not thus neglect
 Our friendly Counsels through a false Respect. 810
 Say, when the hostile Weapons round thee glare,
 Will she, lamenting, make thy Life her Care,
 And turn each Dagger's menac'd Point away ;
 Or will the Tyrant King forego his Prey,
 And send thee to our Camp unhurt again ? 815
 First *Inachus* shall cease to seek the Main,
 And *Achelous* run back, while in my View
 This Lance its verdant Honours shall renew.
 Beneath this friendly Converse lurks a Sword :
 Know, that our Gates too will Access afford : 820
 In us, unperjur'd yet, he may confide ;
 Yet, should he me suspect, I step aside.
 Then let him come, while privy to the Scene,
 His Mother and his Sisters stand between.
 But, shou'd he the contested Crown restore, 825
 Wilt thou resign, thy Term of ruling o'er ?
 This heard, their first Resolves the Warriors change,
 And for the Fight again themselves arrange.

v. 817. *While in my View*] The Hint of this Passage is taken from *Valerius Flaccus, Argonautics, Book 3.*

Hanc ego magnanimi spolium Didymaonis hastam,
 Ut semel est avulsa jugis, a matre peremptâ,
 Quæ neque jam frondes virides neque proferet umbras,
 Fida ministeria, et duras obit horrida pugnas,
 Testor.

Thus

Thus the fierce South by sudden Whirlwinds gains
 The wide-stretch'd Empire of the liquid Plains 830
 From *Boreas*.—Peace and Leagues they seek no more,
 But give a Loose to Rage, and thirst for Gore.

Erinnys takes Advantage of th' Alarms,
 And sows the Seeds of War and future Harms.

Two Tigers mild and innocent of Blood, 835
 Pursu'd their Way to *Dirce*'s sacred Flood.
 By *Bacchus* for the Chariot they were broke,
 And, with their Country, bow'd beneath the Yoke;
 Now old and useless in his Service grown,
 They graze the Fields beside the *Theban* Town, 840
 Gentle as Lambs, and smelling as they pass,
 Of *Indian* Herbage, and *Sabæan* Grafs.
 The *Bacchanalian* Crowd, and elder Priest,
 At each Renewal of their Patron's Feast,

v. 835. *Two Tigers mild and innocent of Blood*] *Lewis Crucius*, in his Account of our Author, observes, that, it being more artful to let the War break out from a trivial Occasion, *Statius* has in this Passage imitated *Virgil*, who informs us, the War between *Æneas* and *Turnus* was caused by the killing of a favourite Stag.—I readily grant with this ingenious Gentleman, that this is an Imitation of *Virgil*, but cannot think the Death of the two Tigers a trifling Occasion of the War. There is certainly a wide Difference between the killing a Deer, the Property of a Country Girl, and two Tigers consecrated to *Bacchus*, the tutelary God and Patron of the *Thebans*: and whoever considers what superstitious Bigots they were, at that Time of Day, will easily imagine, that there could not be a greater Reason for the *Thebans* going to War, than such an Insult on their Gods, and such an Affront to their Religion.—In describing the Caresses and Ornaments which were bestowed on them, he has taken some of the Circumstances from *Virgil*.

Affuetum imperiis soror omni Sylvia curâ
 Mollibus intexens ornabat cornua fertis,
 Pectebatque ferum, puroque in fonte lavabat
 Ille manum patiens, affuetus mensæque herili,
 Errabat sylvis; rursusque ad limina nota
 Ipse domum serâ quamvis se nocte ferebat.

V. 486.

Their

Y

Their sable Spots with purple Fillets blend, 845
 While various Clusters from their Necks depend.
 By Flocks and Herds they were alike belov'd,
 Secure with them the lowing Heifers rov'd.
 On nought they prey, but from each friendly Hand
 Their daily Food in placid Guise demand, 850
 And to the Ground their horrid Mouths incline,
 To lap the purple Produce of the Vine.
 Around the Country all the Day they roam,
 But when at Noon they seek their wonted Home,
 With sacred Fires the Domes and Temples shine, 855
 As if to grace the present God of Wine.
 But when her sounding Lash the Fury shakes,
 Her sounding Lash, compos'd of twisted Snakes,
 Their former Rage returning, from the Town
 They break forth, by the *Grecian* Troops unknown. 860
 As from a diff'rent Quarter of the Sky
 Two Thunder-bolts, with Ruin pregnant, fly,
 And thro' the Clouds a Length of Light extend;
 Thus thro' the Fields their Course the Tigers bend,
 And, fiercely growling, as they rush along, 865
 Invade a Stragler of th' *Inachian* Throng,
 The Prophet's Charioteer, as o'er the Meads
 He drove to *Dirce*'s Stream his Master's Steeds.
 Next *Ida*, the *Tenarian*, they pursue,
 With him *Aetolian* *Acamas* they flew. 870
 The Coursers in Disorder speed their Flight,
 Till brave *Aconteus*, kindled at the Sight
Aconteus, expert in the sylvan Chace,
 (In fair *Arcadia* was his native Place)
 To the Pursuit well-arm'd with Weapons sped, 875
 As turning to their much-lov'd *Thebes*, they fled,
 And

Book VH. STADIUS's THEBAID. 339

And, eager his long-studied Art to prove,
Thro' their pierc'd Back, and gushing Bowels drove
The levell'd Jav'lin.—To the Town again
They fly, and flying, draw upon the Plain 880
A bloody Line, while o'er their upper Skin
The Darts appear, the Points deep-lodg'd within.
They imitate with Groans the human Cry,
And to the Walls their wounded Breasts apply.
This seen, such Shrieks and mournful Clamors rise, 885
As if (the City made a hostile Prize)
The *Tyrian* Fanes and sacred Mansions shone
With Argive Fires, and Splendors not their own.
Less would they grieve, should *Cadmus'* regal Hall,
Or fair *Harmonia*'s bridal Chamber fall. 890
But *Phegeus*, to revenge his injur'd God,
With haughty Mien towards *Aconteus* strode ;
And as disarm'd, he triumph'd o'er the slain,
Aim'd a destructive Blow, nor aim'd in vain.
The youthful Bands of *Tegea* fly too late, 895
To save the Warrior, and avert his Fate.
Thrown o'er the slaughter'd Animals, he lies,
And to th' offended Pow'r a Victim dies.
The Council broke and Congress held in vain
O'er all the Camp loud Tumults rise again.
Back thro' the hostile Troops *Jocasta* flies, 900
Nor longer on her Pray'rs or Tears relies.

v. 879. *To the Town again*] These Lines are taken from the following of *Virgil*, who speaking of the wounded Stag, says.

Saucius at quadrupes nota intra tecta refugit,
Successitque gemens stabulis, questuque cruentus,
Atque imploranti similis, tectum omne replevit. v. 500.

340 STADIUS's THE BAID. Book VII.

Her and her Daughters thence the *Greeks* remove,
 While *Tydeus* strives th' Advantage to improve.
 Go, hope for Peace, and the just Fight delay, 905
 Till the more prudent Foe commence the Fray.
 Say, could ye thus the Work of Death adjourn,
 And wait for the commission'd Queen's Return.
 He spoke, and to his Comrades high display'd,
 (A Signal of the Charge) his naked Blade. 910
 On either Side now Wrath and Vengeance rise,
 And one vast Shout groans upward to the Skies.
 No martial Laws observ'd, nor Order known,
 The Soldiers with their Captains mix, nor own
 Superior Rank: Horse, Foot and ratling Cars 915
 Form one dire *Chaos*.—Urg'd by furious *Mars*,
 Headlong they rush, no Leisure giv'n to shew
 Themselves, or from the Foe their Comrades know.
 This Mode of Fight the closing Armies bore.
 The Trumpets, Horns and Clarions now no more, 920
 As whilom, in the marching Van appear,
 But with the Standards join'd, bring up the Rear.
 Such rose the Conflict from few Drops of Blood,
 And to an Ocean swell'd the purple Flood,
 As Winds at first make Trial of their Force 925
 On Leaves and Trees, then bolder in their Course,

v. 905. *Go, hope for Peace*] Our Author seems in this Place to have had an Eye to the ironical Scoff of *Turnus* upon the *Latians* in the 11th Book of the *Æneid*, as may be seen from the *præceps tempore Tydeus utitur*, which is an Imitation of *arrepto tempore Turnus*.

Imo, ait, O cives, arrepto tempore Turnus,
 Cogite concilium, & pacem laudate sedentes, &c.

v. 925. *As Winds at first*] This Simile is borrowed from *Virgil*.
 So Winds, while yet unfledg'd in Woods they lie,
 In Whispers first their tender Voices try:

Then

O'erturn the Forests, bear the Groves away,
And lay whole Mountains open to the Day.

Ye Muses, now record your Country's Hosts,
And sing the Wars that vex'd your native Coasts, 930
For dwelling near the Blood-mark'd Seat of Fight,
The War's whole Art was obvious to your Sight,
What Time th' *Aonian* Lyre's mellifluous Sound
Was in the louder Blast of Trumpets drown'd.

The Horse of *Pterelas*, unus'd to Arms, 935

And new to all the Battle's dire Alarms,
Soon as his wearied Hand had broke the Reins.

Transports his Master to the distant Plains,
The Spear of *Tydeus* through his Shoulder flies,
Then glancing down, transpierces both his Thighs, 940
And nails him to the Seat: th' affrighted Steed,
Fix'd to his Rider, bounds along the Mead,
And bears him on, tho' now he wields no more
His Arms and Bridle ting'd with reeking Gore.

The Centaur thus (his Life in Part retain'd) 945

Hangs from the Courser which he lately rein'd.

The Conflict glows. *Meneceus* vents his Rage

On *Periphas*. In adverse Arms engage

Hippomedon and *Sybaris*, while near

Rash *Itys*, and th' *Arcadian* Prince appear. 950

A Sword, O *Sybaris*, suppress'd thy Breath;

Young *Itys* from a Shaft receiv'd his Death,

Then issue on the Main with bellowing Rage,

And Storms to trembling Mariners preface. *Dryden's AEn.*

v. 941. *Ye Muses, now record your Countrys]* See Note on the 41st
Line of the 4th Book, and 541st of the 8th.

v. 957. *The Centaur thus, &c.]* A Poet is not confined in his Comparisons to Things that really have an Existence in Nature: he may derive them as well from those that have only a Place in the Creation of Fancy, and World of Imagination. Of this latter Sort is

the

While *Periphas* beneath a Javelin bled.
 The Steel of *Hæmon* lops away the Head
 Of *Grecian Cæneus*, whose wide-yawning Eyes 955
 Explore the sever'd Trunk that bleeding lies.
 This *Abas* saw, and rush'd to spoil the Foe ;
 When lo ! an Arrow from an *Argive* Bow
 Prevents his Aim,—expiring with a Groan,
 He quits the hostile Buckler and his own. 960
Eunæus, thee what Dæmon could persuade
 To leave thy rosy Patron's hallow'd Shade,
 That Shade, to which thou should'st have been confin'd,
 For War's tumultuous Fury ill-resign'd ?
 Ah ! hope not thou to scatter wild Affright 965
 Whose fine-wove Shield (a poor Defence in Fight)
 With Ivy-Wreaths, on *Nysa* cull'd, is crown'd,
 And whose white Stole, descending on the Ground,
 Displays its silken Fringe.—Beneath his Hair
 Each Shoulder lies conceal'd with artful Care. 970
 The tender Down his florid Cheeks o'erspreads ;
 While his weak Cuirass shines with purple Threads.
 A Woman's Bracelets on his Arms he bears,
 And on his Feet embroider'd Sandals wears.
 A Jasper-Button, set in purest Gold 975
 Clasp'd his Robes, grac'd with many a rustling Fold.
 A Quiver, which a *Lynx*'s Hide surrounds,
 And polish'd Bow-Case on his Back resounds.

the Simile before us, which admirably well illustrates the Look and Posture of the dying Warrior, and is as strong and expressive, as it is concise.

v. 965. *Ah ! hope not thou*] It may be observed, that those Priests and Ministers of the Gods, who bear a Part in the *Theban* War, are distinguished from other Leaders by the Splendor and Richness of their Habits.—Our Poet seems to have had in View the *Chlæren* of *Virgil* at the Time he wrote this.

Full

Full of the raging God, the Warrior hies
 Amid the Press, and thus loud-vaunting cries, 980
 Restrain your Rage.—These Walls *Apollo* shew'd
 To *Cadmus*, for his high Deserts bestow'd ;
 These Walls to build (if we may credit Fame)
 The willing Rocks, an happy Omen, came.
 Our Nation, sacred to the Pow'rs above, 985
 Alliance claims with *Mars* and greater *Jove* :
 Nor feign we this to be the native Earth
 Of *Hercules*, and Place of *Bacchus*' Birth.
 Fierce *Capaneus* towards the Boaster steers
 His Course, and brandishes two beamy Spears. 990
 As when the King of Beasts at early Dawn
 Springs from his Thicket to the dewy Lawn,
 And views a Deer that bounds along the Green,
 Or Calf, whose budding Horns are scarcely seen,
 Tho' the stern Swains a dreadful Circle form, 995
 And darted Javelins rain a steely Storm,
 Fearless, regardless, he pursues his Way,
 And unappall'd with Wounds, invades the Prey.

v. 991. *As when, &c.*] This Simile is borrowed from *Homer*.

"Ωσε λέων ἐχάρη μεγάλω ἐπὶ σύμμαχοι κύρος,
 Εύρων ἡ ἐλαφον περάον, ἡ ἄγριον αἴγαο,
 Πεινάων μάλα ταρε τε κατεσθίει, ἐπερ ἀν αὐτού
 Σεύανται παχεῖς τε κύνες, θαλεροίτ αἰγῆοι.
 'Ως ἐχαίρη, &c.

As *Virgil* has copied it too, I shall give the Reader an Opportunity
 of comparing the two Imitations with the Original.

Impastus stabula alta Leo ceu s̄āpe peragrans,
 (Sudet enim vesana famis) si forte fugacem
 Conspexit capream, aut surgentem in cornua cervum,
 Gaudet hians immane, comasque arrexit & haret
 Visceribus super accumbens ; lavat improba teter
 Ora cruor.

Thus *Capaneus*, exulting o'er the Foe,
 With his pois'd Javelin meditates a Blow, 1000
 But ere the pond'rous Weight of Death descends,
 With Blasphemy Reproaches thus he blends.
 Why dost thou, doom'd to bleed beneath my Spear
 With Shrieks unmanly strike our Hosts with Fear?
 In wordy Wars with *Tyrian* Dames engage, 1005
 But where's the vaunted Author of thy Rage?
 Would he were present! ere he scarce had said,
 Unknowing of Repulse, the Weapon fled,
 And faintly tinkled on the glitt'ring Shield;
 Whose folded Hides a speedy Passage yield. 1010
 Forth wells the Blood, his Armour knocks the Ground,
 And with long Sobs the Plates of Gold resound.
 He dies, he dies, the rash Boy-Warrior dies,
 And wept and honour'd by his Patron lies
 Him drunken *Ismaros* (the *Thyrsus* broke) 1015
 And *Timolus*, long reluctant to the Yoke,
 Him *Nysa*, and *Tbecean Naxos* mourn,
 And *Ganges*, to discharge his Orgies sworn.
 Nor was *Eteocles* in Combat slow;
 Less oft his milder Brother aims a Blow. 1020
 Conspicuous in his Car the Prophet fate:
 His Steeds, as prescient of their hast'ning Fate,

1020. *Less oft his milder Brother*] The Poet here pays a great Compliment to *Polynices*. He tells the Reader, that while *Eteocles* is wading through Blood and Carnage to the Crown, and making Havock among the *Grecians*, *Polynices* was checked in his Conquest by the tender Impulses of Humanity, and Regard to his Countrymen.

v. 1021. *Conspicuous in his Car, &c.*] We find *Jupiter* in the seventeenth Book of the *Iliad*, bestowing the same Honours on *Hector*, and dignifying his Exit with a Blaze of Glory, as Mr. *Pope* expresses it.

With Dread move on, while Clouds of Dust arise,
Obscure the Fight, and blacken half the Skies.
Him *Pbæbus* honours on his dying Day, 1025
And gives a Lustre to his setting Ray.
He decks his Shield and Helm with starry Fires ;
While *Mars* with fiercest Rage his Soul inspires,
And, in Compliance to the God's Request,
From hostile Swords defends his manly Breast, 1030
That pure, nor violated here above
By Wounds, he may descend to *Stygian Jove*.
Thus, conscious, he must soon resign his Breath,
Serene, he walks the dreadful Path of Death
And rushes on his Foes.—Despair of Life 1035
Supplies new Strength and Vigour in the Strife.
His Limbs increase in Beauty, Force and Size,
And ne'er before so well he read the Skies.
With unextinguish'd Heat of War he glows,
And pours redoubled Fury on his Foes. 1040
Oft was he known to break with lenient Art
The Strokes of Chance, and ease the human Heart,
T'encroach on Fate's just Rights and interpose
To save the wretched from impending Woes.

— Δῦ δέ μιν "Αρης
Δειγός ενυπάλιον πληθει δέρρεοι μέλε' εὐλός
Αλκής καὶ φένεον. —

v. 1038. *And ne'er before*] *Amphiaraus* is represented as being endued with a greater Degree of Prescience and Divination just before his Death, which Circumstance brings to my Remembrance four Lines of the celebrated *Waller*.

— Wiser Men become,
As they draw near to their eternal Home.
Leaving the old, both Worlds at once they view,
That stand upon the Threshold of the new.

Alas !

Alas! how chang'd from him, who great and good 1045
 At *Phæbus*' Shrine in holy Office stood,
 Who what each low'ring Cloud portended knew,
 And Omens read from ev'ry Wing that flew!
 A countless Herd expir'd beneath his Blade
 (Unhappy Victims to his future Shade) 1050
 As when fell Planets rule the deathful Year,
 And dart Destruction from their baleful Sphere.
Pblegyas and *Phyleus* fell (his Javelin thrown)
 His Scythe-hung Car mows *Cremetaon* down,
 And *Chromis*: one in adverse Fight was slain; 1055
 His Knee cut off, the other press'd the Plain.
 Next *Chromis*, *Iphinous*, and *Sages* bled,
 By missive Weapons rank'd among the dead.
 Unshorn *Lycoreus* groans his Soul away,
 And *Gyas*, sacred to the God of Day; 1060
 His Heim uncrested by the forceful Spear,
 He knew, but knew too late the mitred Seer.
 Then at *Alcathoüs* a Stone he threw,
 The well-aim'd Stone the hapless Warrior slew.
 Rear'd on the Margin of *Carystos*' Flood 1065
 His House, with Infants Cries resounding, stood.
 His Friends at length the senseless Wretch persuade
 To change the Sailor's for the Soldier's Trade.
 Nor dying he prefers th' experienc'd Main,
 And wintry Tempests to the bloody Plain. 1070

v. 1051. *As when fell Planets*] Homer, Virgil and Milton have fine Similes drawn from Planets, Comets, &c. there is one of the last mentioned Author in particular, that is wonderfully sublime.

— He Like a Comet burn'd
 That fires the Length of *Ophiuchus* huge
 In th' Arctic Sky; and from his horrid hair
 Shakes Pestilence and War.

The

The Rout and Slaughter of his Host survey'd,
Asopian Hypseus rushes to their Aid :
 Rage in his Eyes, and Ruin in his Hand,
 He galls the Rear of the *Tyrinthian* Band,
 But the Priest seen, the Tide of Wrath he turns 1075
 On him, and with redoubled Fury burns.
 Rang'd in a Wedge, his Troops beside him stood,
 And form'd with Spears erect an ambient Wood.
 He lifts, in Front of all the hostile Ranks,
 A Javelin, cull'd on his paternal Banks, 1080
 And cries.—*O Father of th' Aonian Streams,*
 Whose Surface with ethereal Embers gleams,
 Direct my Aim : this I, thy Son, demand,
 And th' Oaken Spear, the Native of thy Strand.
 If thou hast fought the Ruler of the Skies,
 Give me the mighty *Phæbus* to despise.
 From his gash'd Head I'll tear the circling Crown,
 And with his Armour in thy Current drown.
Asopus heard his Pray'r, but *Sol* deny'd
 Indulgence to his Son, and turn'd aside 1090
 To faithful *Herses* the well-darted Spear,
Herses, the valiant Augur's Charioteer.
Apollo now directs the flowing Reins,
 And *Aliagmon*'s Form and Visage feigns.

v. 1077. *Rang'd in a Wedge*] On reading this Passage, how naturally do the following Verses of *Milton* steal in upon our Memory !

While thus he spake, th' angelic Squadrons bright
 Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned Horns, &c.

Book 4. Line 977.

v. 1093. *Apollo now directs*] This Piece of Machinery is beautiful to a great Degree : it is imitated from the 5th Book of *Homer*, where *Pallas* thrusts *Sthenelus* out of *Diomede*'s Chariot, and vaulting into it herself, assists that Hero in his Attack upon *Mars*.

Their

Their Souls unman'd, and all Resistance lost, 1095
 A sudden Panic seiz'd the *Theban* Host.

Their Gripe relax'd, their Weapons strew the Ground;
 They fall thro' Fear, and die without a Wound.
 T'was doubtful, if th' augmented Burden speeds,
 Or clogs the Progress of the furious Steeds. 1100

As from some Cloud-capt Hill a Fragment worn
 By Dint of Age, or by fierce Whirlwinds torn,
 Rolls down, and sweeps along in its Descent
 Men, Trees and Cots from their Foundations rent;
 Nor stops, till some deep Vale confines its Force, 1105
 Or River, intercepted in its Course.
 So rolls th' ensanguin'd Car beneath the Load
 Of the great Hero, and the greater God.

v. 1101. *As from*] I wonder, that neither Mr. Pope nor Mr. Wharton have taken Notice of this truly sublime Comparison in their Observation on a similar one in *Homer* and *Virgil*, especially as they have quoted one of *Tasso*, in my Opinion, much inferior to our Author's. — I shall transcribe all three.

————— 'Ολοϊτροχός ὡς ἀπὸ πέτρης,
 "Οὐτε κατὰ σεφάνης ποταμὸς χειμαρρός ὡση,
 Γῆςας ἀπέτω ὄμορφα ἀναιδέσ οὐχιας πέτρης,
 "Τψι τὸν αὐαθράσκων πέτεται, κτυπέει δὲ θ' ὑπ' αὐτῷ
 "Υλη· οὐδὲ σφαλέως θέει ἐμπεδον, οὐφερὸν ἐν ἵκηται
 Ισόπεδον, τότε δὲ τι κυλίνδεται, ἐσύμενος περ.

Ac veluti montis saxum de vertice præceps
 Cum ruit avulsum vento, ceu turbidus imber
 Proluit, aut annis solvit sublapsa vetustas;
 Fertur in abruptum magno mons improbus actu,
 Exultatque solo, sylvas, armenta virosque
 Involvens secum.

Qual gran fasso talor, ch'o la vecchiezza
 Solve da un monte, o svelle ira de' venti
 Ruinosa dirupa, e parta, e spezza
 Le selve, e colle case anco gli armenti
 Tal già trahea della, &c.

v. 1107. *So rolls*] It is remarkable, that these two Lines are almost a Transcript of *Homer*'s.

High o'er the deathful Scene *Apollo* stands,
 And wields the Spears and Reins with equal Hands: 1110
 Unerring Skill he to his Priest imparts,
 But mocks the *Theban* Shooter's useles Arts.
 Now *Antiphus*, unaided by his Steed,
 And *Menalus* lie prostrate on the Mead,
Aethion then of *Heliconian* Strain; 1115
Polites, noted for his Brother slain,
 And *Lampus*, who with Lust transported, strove
 To force fair *Mantho*'s interdicted Love:
 At him the God himself directs a Dart,
 And drove the shining Mischief to his Heart. 1120
 On Hills of slain the rapid Coursers tread,
 Destroy the living, and deform the dead.
 The mangled Carcasses are furrow'd o'er;
 And the dash'd Axles blush with human Gore.
 O'er some the kindling Car, unnotic'd, rolls, 1125
 Breaks ev'ry Limb, and crushes out their Souls;
 Whilst others, helpless with a mortal Wound,
 Foresee it smoaking o'er the distant Ground.
 Now thro' his Hands the slipp'ry Bridle glides,
 And the besprinkled Beam, unstable, slides: 1130
 The Steeds, their Hoofs involv'd in Carnage stood,
 And the spik'd Wheels are clogg'd with clotted Blood.
 The Javelins, which (their Points infix'd within)
 Stand extant on the Surface of the Skin,
 The raging Hero from the wounded drew, 1135
 Whose parting Souls with Groans the Car pursue.
 At length (his whole Divinity confess'd)
Phæbus the wondring Augur thus address'd.

— Μίγας δ' ἐπαρχε φύγει οὐκέπειν
 Βεβητούντος οὐντι γέγοντος θεού, ἀνδρες τοιούτοι. Iliad. 5. 838.

Use

350 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book VII.

Use well thy Time, whilst in Respect to me
Grim Death delays the Work of Destiny. 1140

We're overcome.—Whate'er the Fates ordain,
They execute, nor weave the Woof again.
Go then, and mindful of the Promise made,
Gladden Elysium with thy present Shade,
Secure, no Burial-Honours thou shalt want, 1145
Nor sue in vain for cruel *Creon's* Grant.

To this the Chief, surcharg'd with hostile Spoils,
Replies, and for a while respires from Toils:
At first I knew thee thro' thy borrow'd Look;
Beneath th' unwonted Weight the Chariot shook 1150

Yet say, how long wilt thou defer my Fate?
These Honours ill become my wretched State.
E'en now I hear the Porter's triple Yell,
Hoarse-founding *Styx*, and all the Streams of Hell.
Take then the laurell'd Honours of my Head, 1055
Too holy for the Regions of the dead.

If to thy dying Prophet ought is due,
With my last Voice this Boon I now renew,
And to thy Wrath resign my trait'rous Spouse;
Avenge, avenge the broken Marriage-Vows. 1260

The grieving God descending on the Plains,
The Coursers groan'd, and bow'd to Dust their Manes.

Thus fares a Vessel in a stormy Night,
When the twin-Stars withhold their friendly Light;

Death in their Thoughts, they shriek at ev'ry Blast,
And deem the present Moment for their last.

And now the grassy Surface of the Mead,
Convuls'd with frequent Tremors 'gan recede:
A thicker Cloud of Dust obscures the Skies,
And Murmurs dire from deepest Hell arise. 1170

This

This Sound mistaken for the Crash of Fight,
From Field: the trembling Warriours urge their
Flight.

Another Tremor now bends to the Ground
Men, Horses, Arms, and shakes the Fields around.
The leafy Grove inclines its various Head,
And silent from his Banks *Ismenos* fled.
The public Anger lost in private Fears,
They ground their Arms, and leaning on their Spears,
Start back, as on each other's Face they view
Wild Terror imag'd in a pallid Hue. 1180

As when *Bellona* forms a naval Fray,
In Scorn of *Neptune*, on the watry Way :
If haply some fell Tempest interpose,
Each thoughtful of himself, neglects his Foes ;
The common Dangers cause their Ire to cease, 1185
And mutual Fears impose a sudden Peace.

Such was the fluctuating Fight to view :
Whether from subterraneous Prisons flew
Imbosom'd Blasts, and gather'd from afar,
In one vast Burst discharg'd the windy War : 1190

Or latent Springs had worn the rotten Clay,
And open'd to themselves a gradual Way :
Or on this Side the swift Machine of Heav'n
Inclin'd, by more than wonted Impulse driv'n,
Or whether *Neptune* bade old Ocean roar, 1195

And dash'd the briny Foam from Shore to Shore :
Or Earth herself would warn by these Portents
The Seer, or Brother-Kings of both Events ;
Lo ! she discloses wide her hollow Womb :
(Night fear'd the Stars, the Stars the nether Gloom.)

The

352 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book VII.

The Prophet and his Coursers, while they strive
To pass, the yawning Cleft ingulphs alive :
Nor did he quit the Reins and Arms in Hand,
But with them plung'd to the *Tartarean* Strand ;
And as he fell, gaz'd backward on the Light ; 1205
And griev'd to see the Field would soon unite,
Till now a lighter Tremor clos'd again
The Ground, and darken'd *Pluto's* wide Domain.

T H E

T H E

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE EIGHTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Poet, having described the Effects of Amphiaraus's Coming into the infernal Regions, introduces Pluto expressing his Displeasure at his abrupt Intrusion, and exhorting the Furies to retaliate the Insult by an Excursion to the World above. At length, however, Amphiaraus pacifies him. The Confederates, terrified by this extraordinary Phænomenon, quit the Field in great Disorder and Confusion, and express their Concern for the Death of the Seer in a long Oration. The Thebans spend the Night in Feasting and Jollity. Adrastus calls a Council in the Morning, in which it is resolved, that Thiodamas should succeed Amphiaraus as Augur: who, in Pursuance of his Election appeases the Earth by Sacrifice, and delivers a funeral Oration in Praise of his Predecessor. The Battle recommencing, Tydeus on the Part of the Allies, and Hæmon on the Part of the Thebans, signalize themselves, by Feats of Prowess and Gallantry. The Thebans, disheartened by the Death of Atys, and Retreat of Hæmon, are rallied by Menæceus, and renew the Fight with redoubled Vigour and Alacrity. The Poet then returns to Thebes: and while Ismene is relating a Dream, which she had about her Lover Atys, to her Sister, he is brought into the Palace just upon the Point of Death: this gives Rise to a very affecting Scene. Tydeus in the mean Time makes a great Slaughter of his Enemies; and meeting with Eteocles, exchanges a Dart with him: but the other flying, in the Pursuit of him he is overpowered by his Enemies, and receiving a mortal Wound, expires gnawing the Head of Menalippus, who gave it him.

T H E

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE EIGHTH.

SOON as the Prophet reach'd the dreary Coasts
 Of *Styx*, the Mansion of pale-visag'd Ghosts,
 Explor'd the Secrets of the World below,
 And pierc'd the Regions of eternal Woe ;
 His Garb terrific, and loud-braying Arms
 Fill *Pluto*'s wide Dominion with Alarms. 5
 The Shades with Horror gaze upon his Car,
 His Weapons, Steeds distinguish'd in the War,
 And his new Body : for he neither came
 Black from the Urn, nor season'd with the Flame ; 10
 But with the Sweat of *Mars* was cover'd o'er,
 And his hack'd Target stain'd with dewy Gore.
 Nor had *Erinnys* yet with impious Hand
 O'er his cold Members wav'd her flaming Brand,

There is something very awful and solemn in the Poet's Description of the Terror and Confusion which the Presence of *Amphiaraus* occasioned in the infernal Regions. But what we should principally regard it for, is the great Light it throws on many Parts of the heathen Mythology, which would otherwise seem dark and mysterious. In short, it is altogether as fine a Representation of Hell, as any we meet with in the ancient Poets.

356 STATIUS's THEBAID. Book VIII.

Or *Proserpine*, admitting him a Ghost, 15
 Inscrib'd his Name upon the murky Post.
 Nor to the Task the Sisters' Hands suffic'd ;
 The Work as yet unfinish'd he surpriz'd :
 Then, nor till then, they cut the fatal Thread,
 And freed the Seer, irregularly dead. 20
 The Manes of *Elisium* gaz'd around,
 (Their Pleasures interrupted at the Sound)
 And those, who station'd in the Gulph beneath,
 An Air less pure, and less enliv'ning breathe.
 Then groan the Lakes that parch'd with Sulphur glow ;
 And sluggish Waters, scarcely seen to flow ; 26
 While *Charon*, wont to plough the loaded Stream,
 Mourns his lost Fare, a melancholy Theme ;
 And grieves, that Shades had gain'd the *Stygian* Shore,
 By Chasms in Earth, and Means unknown before. 30
 In the mid Part of his unhappy State
 The King of *Erebus* in Judgment sate :
 The Shades he question'd on their former Crimes,
 Displeas'd with all that fill his dreary Climes,
 There Death in various Shapes and Orders stands, 35
 The Sister Fiends with Vengeance in their Hands,
 And Punishment, distinguish'd in the Throng
 By Chains harsh clanking, as she strides along.
 With the same Thumb the Fates condemn and save.
 Mean while fresh Numbers issue from the Grave. 40

v. 39. *With the same Thumb*] The Thumb was a Token of Favour and Displeasure among the Antients. When a Man pressed his Thumb, it was a Sign of his Regard, as *Pliny* informs us, *Lib. 28. Cap. 11. Pollices, cum favemus, premere etiam proverbio jubemur.* When the Thumb was turned, his Displeasure was signified, which was so great a Mark of Malevolence, that by this alone the People of

BOOK VIII. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 357

There *Minos* with his Colleague hears each Cause,
Restrains the King, and mitigates the Laws.

Nor was *Cocytos* absent Stream of Woes,
And *Phlegethon*, that kindles as it flows.

Or *Styx*, whom e'en th' attesting Gods revere. 45

Then trembling *Pluto* first experienc'd Fear ;
And spoke in Wrath, as sick'ning he survey'd
The starry Splendors, through the Cleft display'd.
What Pow'r has forc'd Earth's Barrier thus away,
And join'd the upper and the nether Day ? 50
Who pierc'd our Gloom ? say, whence these Threats
arise,

From the stern Lord of Ocean or the Skies ?

of *Rome* ordered the Gladiators to be slain, as we learn from *Ju-
venal, Sat. 3.*

Munera nunc edunt, et verso pollice vulgi
Quemlibet occidunt populariter,

v. 43. *Nor was Cocytos*] *Milton* has given us a fine Picture of
the Rivers of Hell in the 2d Book of *Par. Lost*, Verse 577.

Abhorred *Styx*, the Flood of deadly Hate,
Sad *Acheron* of Sorrow, black and deep:
Cocytos, nam'd of Lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful Stream ; fierce *Phlegethon*
Whose Waves of Torrent Fire inflame with Rage.
Far off from those a slow and silent Stream,
Lethe, the River of Oblivion rolls
Her watry Labyrinth, whereof who drinks
Forthwith his former State and Being forgets,
Forgets both Joy and Grief, Pleasure and Pain.

v. 45. *Or Styx*] Though I have spoken of this River elsewhere,
I cannot deny myself the Pleasure of transcribing *Hesiod*'s humorous
Account of the Punishment of those Gods who had swore falsely by
it. For one whole Year (says he) they must abstain from Nectar
and Ambrosia, and lie on the Ground dumb and lethargic. After
a Year, greater Punishments await them: for they are banished for
nine Years, and debarred the Society of the Gods. At the End of
the tenth Year however, they resume their pristine State and Dign-
ity.

Boaster, stand forth on thy own Terms of Fight ;
 Hence let Form sink to Chaos, Day to Night.
 To whom more dear ?—I guard the guilty World, 55
 Hither from Heav'n by adverse Fortune hurld.
 Nor e'en is this my own : I rule in vain,
 When *Jove* encroaches thus upon my Reign.
 When on my Throne the Rays of *Titan* beat,
 And Light abhor'd pervades my gloomy Seat. 60
 Wants he, the King of Heav'n, my Strength to prove ?
 The fetter'd Giants will each Doubt remove,
 The restless *Titans* (who did erst aspire
 Earth to revisit) and his wretched Sire.
 Why wills he, that my Toils should never cease, 65
 Why must the Light I lost disturb my Peace ?
 But should it please, each Kingdom I'll display,
 And veil in *Stygian* Mists the Blaze of Day.
 Hence the twin Sons of *Tyndar* I'll detain,
 Nor render back th' *Arcadian* Youth again. 70
 For why does he thus journey to and fro,
 And waft around the Messages of Woe ?
 Why should *Ixion*, with fresh Labours worn,
 And thirsting *Tantalus* my Anger mourn ?
 How long shall living Ghosts, unpunish'd roam 75
 From Bank to Bank, and violate my Dome ?

v. 49. *What Pow'r*] Of all the Orations in the *Thebaid* there is none that can give less Pleasure to the Reader, and consequently less Credit to the Translator than this before us. Not that *Pluto* speaks without Spirit, but his Speech has many Allusions to dark Circumstances in heathen Mythology; so that I very much question, if, after all the Pains I have taken, it is intelligible to the greatest Part of my Readers. It is not of a Natnre to shine in Poetry: and all I could do to make it tolerable, was to give it as smooth Numbers as possible, and curtail that Length which makes it still more disgusting.

With

With me *Piritbous* durst once contend,
And *Theseus* sworn to his audacious Friend :
Then of *Alcides* too (my Guard remov'd)
The furious Arm and Strength robust I prov'd. 80
Now Hell, because some idle Feuds arise
Between two petty Princes, open lies.
I saw, when *Orpheus* the sad Strain purſu'd,
The Fiends in Tears, the Sisters' Tasks renew'd.
The sweet Musician o'er my Wrath prevail'd, 85
Yet, heedless of the stern Condition, fail'd.
Once, and but once I sought the World above,
And snatch'd in *Sicily* the Joys of Love :
The bold Excursion stung th' ethereal Prince,
As the hard Laws that quick ensu'd, evince. 90
At each six Moons her Mother at my Hands
My Consort for an equal Term demands.
But why these Plaints ?—Go, Minister of Ill,
Revenge the Insult, and our Wrath fulfill.
If ought yet unconceiv'd, and unexpres'd 95
Thy ready Wit, and fertile Brain suggest,
On which thy Sisters may with Envy gaze,
And I with Wonder.—Go, and win our Praise.
But, as an Omen of our future Hate,
And as a Prelude to the stern Debate, 100
Let the two Brothers meet without the Wall,
And, fir'd by mutual Rage, in Combat fall.
Let one with more than brutal Fury feed
On his Foe's Head, expiring in the Deed,
Another the last fun'ral Flames deny, 105
And taint with Carcasses his native Sky.
Such Acts may *Jupiter* with Pleasure view.
Nor let thy Wrath our Realms alone pursue.

360 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book VIII.

Seek one, who may with Heav'n itself engage,
 And with his Shield repell the Thund'r's Rage. 110
 Why should they rather dare thro' Hell to rove,
 Than with heap'd Mountains scale the Walls of *Jove*?
 This said, he ceas'd.—His dreary Palace takes
 The Signal dire, and to the Centre shakes.
 His Earth and that which overhangs him, nod 115
 Beneath his Voice, and own the speaking God.
 Great was the Shock, as when his Brother rolls
 His Eyes around, and bends the starry Poles.
 He then rejoins.—For thee, who durst explore
 The sacred Void inviolate before, 120
 What Pains can I devise?—half shrunk with Fear,
 His Arms and Chariot gone, proceeds the Seer.
 Yet still the Badges of his Order grace
 The Chief extinct, and shade his clay-cold Face;
 Tho' black, a Fillet decks his awful Brow, 125
 And his Hand grasps a wither'd Olive-Bough.
 If in this holy Synod I may speak,
 And in my own Defence my Silence break,
 Grand End of all Things, but to me who knew
 Each mystic Cause, that mortal Eye can view) 130
 Source of Existence, thy stern Threats resign
 And to my Pray'r thy willing Ears incline;
 Nor deign to punish one who strictly fears
 To disobey, and all thy Laws reveres.
 No Rape *Herculean* drew me to thy Coast, 135
 Nor was illicit Venery my Boast:

135 *No Rape Herculean*] The Reader must observe, that *Her-cules* himself did not design a Rape upon *Proserpine*, but only went down to Hell with a View of rescuing *Theseus* and *Pirithous*, who had attempted it, from the Punishment that *Pluto* had intended for them.

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BOOK VIII. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 361

On these Insignia for the Truth rely,
Alas! my coward Heart ne'er soar'd so high.
Let not our Chariot pale thy Consort's Cheek,
Nor Cerberus with Grief his Cavern seek. 140

An Augur once by *Phæbus* much careſſ'd,
The gloomy Void of Chaos I attest,
(For why by *Sol* should *Pluto*'s Subject ſwear)
That for no Crime this Punishment I bear.
This sacred Truth the *Cretan*'s Urn must know, 145
This sacred Truth impartial *Minos* show.

Bought of my treach'rous Wife for cursed Gold,
And in the List of *Argive* Chiefs enroll'd,
Resign'd to Fate, I fought the *Theban* Plain,
Whence flock the Shades that ſcarce thy Realms
contain. 150

When (how my Soul yet dreads!) an Earthquake came
Big with Destruction, and my trembling Frame,
Rapt from the Midſt of gaping Thousands, hurl'd
To Night eternal in thy nether World.

What were my Thoughts, while thro' Earth's hollow
Womb 155

I roll'd upheld in Air, and lost in Gloom?
Nought to my Comrades or my Country left,
Nor of my captive Life by *Thebes* bereft.
Doom'd never more to breathe *Lernean* Air,
Or to my wond'ring Friends, inurn'd, repair. 160
No ſculptur'd Tomb to lengthen out my Famine,
No weeping Parents, nor odorous Flame:
To thee the whole of fun'ral Pomp I bear,
Nor ſhall I ought with these fleet Coursers dare,
Or murmur to become a ſubject Shade: 165
I wave the Honours that were whilom paid:

No.

No Prescience of the future dost thou want,
Secure of all the Destinies can grant.
But check thy Rage, the Deities regard,
And for my Spouse reserve the dire Reward : 170
If, in the Process of advancing Age,
She fall, a Victim worthier of thy Rage.
The Monarch heard, nor hearing disapprov'd,
Tho' loth to spare, and scorning to be mov'd.
The Lion thus, when menac'd with the Light 175
Of obvious Weapons, calls forth all his Might ;
But, if his prostrate Foe declines the Strife,
Stalks o'er him, and disdains so cheap a Life.
Mean while they seek the late-redoubted Car,
Adorn'd with Fillets, and the Wreaths of War, 180
Astonish'd, as by none it was survey'd,
Or crush'd in Conflict, or a Capture made.
The Troops, suspicious now, recoiling yield,
Walk round the Traces of the treach'rous Field,
And all prefer the Sweets of vital Breath 185
To Stygian Pomp, and an inglorious Death.
While at a Distance in the Road to Fame
Adraustus guides his Troops, *Palæmon* came,
The Messenger of Woe, and trembling cries,
(For scarce he trusted to his conscious Eyes, 190

v. 175. This Allusion to the Generosity of the Lion has the Sanc-
tion of all the Naturalists that ever treated on this Animal to con-
firm it. *Claudian* in his Eulogy on *Stilicon*, Lib. 4. says,

Obvia prosternas, prostrataque more Leonum
Despicias alacres ardent quum sternere Tauros,
Transiliunt prædas humiles. Hac ipse magistrâ
Dat veniam viætis, hac exhortante calores
Horrificos, & quæ nunquam nocitura timentur
Jurgia, contentus solo terrore coercet.

Tho'

Tho station'd near the Chief ingulph'd, he saw,
All pale and sad, the discontinuous Flaw.)

O Monarch, turn thy Steps, and seek with Speed
The *Doric* Turrets, and our native Mead ;
If haply, where we left them, they remain. 195

No Arms we need ; the Battle bleeds in vain.
Our unavailing Swords why wield we more ?
When Earth (a Prodigy unfeen of Yore)
Absorbs our Warriors. From beneath our Feet
The Ground we press seems striving to retreat. 200

I view'd myself the Path to Night profound,
Oeclides rushing thro' the sudden Wound,
Than whom of mortal Race was none more dear,
To the bright Lamps that gild yon azure Sphere.

Long did I stretch my fault'ring Hands, and strain 205
My Voice ; at length convinc'd, that Help was vain,
I ply'd the sounding Lash, and quickly left
The steaming Champaign, in huge Furrows cleft :

Nor common is the Ill ; the Mother knows
Her Sons, and Favour to the *Thebans* shows. 210

Thus he. The Monarch doubts, 'till *Mopsus* came,
And trembling *Aetor*, who report the same.

But Fame, who loves each Terror to enhance,
Relates, that more had shar'd the same Mischance.

Spontaneous then the Soldiers quit their Ground, 215
Nor wait, as Custom was, the Trumpet's Sound.

v. 216. *Nor wait as Custom was*] *Laetantius* in his Note on this Passage furnishes us with a Piece of Antiquity, that, I believe, few of our Readers are acquainted with : *viz.* that among the Ancients every Soldier, previously to his being enlisted, took an Oath, that he would never leave the Battle, before the Sounding of a Retreat.

Yet

Yet was their Progress slow. They scarcely trail
 Their Legs along, so much did Fear prevail.
 Their very Steeds, as sensible, oppose
 Their Flight, regardless of repeated Blows; 220
 Nor, won by Blandishments, increase their Speed,
 Or lift their Eyes from the terrific Mead.
 The *Thebans* push'd the Charge, till Vesper led
 Bright *Cynthia*'s Steeds, with dusky Shades o'erspread:
 Now Night, that soon their Terrors must increase, 225
 Imposes a short Interval of Peace.
 What were their Aspects, when they took their Fill
 Of Sorrow's Draught? full many a pearly Rill
 Stole from their Helms unlac'd. Nought then could
 ease
 Their jaded Spirits that was wont to please. 230
 They throw aside their Bucklers wetted o'er,
 Such as they were. Nor cleans'd their Darts of Gore,
 Nor prais'd their Horses, nor for Battle drest
 The high-rais'd Honours of the shining Crest.
 Such was their Grief they scarcely care to close. 235
 Their Wounds, and staunch the Blood that freely flows,
 Or with the due Resource of Food and Rest
 Renew their Strength, by Toils of War opprest:
 All dwell with Tears on the late Augur's Praise,
 His Love of Truth, and Merit of the Bays. 240

v. 225. *Now Night*] Milton has some beautiful Lines on the same Subject.

Now Night her Course began, and over Heav'n
 Inducing Darkness, grateful Truce impos'd,
 And Silence on the odious Din of War.

Par. Loft, B. 6. L. 406.

v. 239. *All dwell*] The Reader cannot but sympathize with the Grecians on the Loss of their Patriot and Prophet *Amphiaraus*, whose Virtues

BOOK VIII. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 365

One Rumour only thro' the Camp is spread,
That all their Fortune with the Gods is fled:
Where are his sacred Arms, rever'd in War,
His Crest with Fillets grac'd, and laurell'd Car ?
Could not *Castalian* Lakes and Caves retard 245
His Death ? was this his Patron God's Reward ?
Who'll teach us now, what falling Stars declare,
And hallow'd Lightnings inauspicious Glare ?
What Heav'n betokens in the Victim slain,
When ye should march ; what Accidents detain ? 250
What Hour is most averse to Dove-ey'd Peace
And when to bid the Trump of Discord cease ?
Who now will all Futurity disclose,
The just Interpreter of Bliss or Woes ?
To thee the War's Events were all foreknown, 255
And all the public Evils, and thy own ;
Yet (such was Virtue's Influence) thou didst join
Our Troops, and clad in social Armour shine.
And when the fatal Hour and Period came,
Didst find a leisure Time to purchase Fame 260
By adverse Signs o'erthrown, and Heroes slain,
Till Heaps of Carcasses deform'd the Plain.
What Deeds of Slaughter, and what Scenes of Death
Might we have seen, had Heav'n prolong'd thy Breath ?
What Lot befalls thee ? canst thou visit Earth 266
Again, and, as it were, renew thy Birth ?

Virtues endear him to the latest Posterity. And here it may not be improper to observe, that the old Proposition, *All Men are alike after Death*, is only partially true. For the virtuous and useful Member of Society lives in the Memory of the Public, and is never thought of but with Sorrow, nor mentioned but with Honour; whereas the Villain and Pest of his Country is either soon forgotten, or remembered but with Infamy and Detestation.

Say,

Say, art thou thron'd beside thy fav'ring Fates,
 A Counsellor in all their high Debates?
 Still by a grateful Change dost thou obtain
 The Knowledge of the Future, and explain? 270
 Or did the Pow'r who rules the Realms below,
 In Pity to thy Sufferings, bestow
 Elysium, and her Birds of hallow'd Flight?
 Whate'er's thy Lot beneath, the God of Light,
 Bewailing long his Loss, shall loath Relief, 275
 And *Delphos* mourn thy Death in silent Grief.
 Shut on this Day shall *Delos* e'er remain,
 The Sea-girt *Tenedos*, and *Cyrrha's* Fane;
 No bold Enquirer ope the *Clarian* Gate,
 Nor *Branchus* from his Shrine interpret Fate: 280

v. 278. *Tenedos*] Is an Island of the *Hellespont*, situated over against *Troy* and sacred to *Apollo*, whence *Chryses* in his Address to *Apollo*, says, Τενέδοιο τε ἵψι ἀνάστεις.

v. 278. *And Cyrrha's Fane*] See Note on the 673d Verse of the 3d Book.

v. 279. *The Clarian Gate*] This and the other Places here mentioned were noted for the most famous Oracles.

v. 280. *Nor Branchus* As a Supplement to my Note on the 686 Verse of the 3d Book, I shall describe the following Account of *Branchus* from *Varro*. 'Olus quidem decimus ab Apolline, cum in peregrinatione pranderet in littore, ac deinde proficisceretur, oblitus est filium nomine Simerum, qui pervenit in saltum Patronis cuiusdam, et cum esset receptus, cæpit cum suis pueris capras pascere, Aliquando prehenderunt cygnum, et illum veste coopererunt, dumque ipsi pugnant ute*r* illum patri munus offerret, et essent fatigati certamine: rejecta veste mulierem invenerunt, et cum fugerent revocati ab eâ moniti sunt, ut patres unice Simerum diligenter puerum: illi quæ audierunt Patroni indicarunt. Tunc Patron Simerum pro filio suo nimio dilexit affectu, eique filiam suam ducendam locavit uxorem. Illa cum pregnans ex eo esset vidi in somniis per fauces suas introisse solem, et exisse per ventrem: ideo infans editus Branchus vocatus est quia mater ejus per fauces fibi viderat uterum penetrasse. Hic cum in sylvis Apollinem osculatus fuisset, comprehensus est ab eo, et acceptâ corona

For *Lycia* none shall leave his native Air,
Nor for Advice to *Didyma* repair.

Jove's panting Oaks shall on this Day be mute,
Nor horned *Ammon* grant the Pilgrim's Suit :

The very Laurels wither, Rivers cease
To flow, and *Trojan Thymbra* rests in Peace. 285

No certain Knowledge shall the Air unfold
By Chirpings sage, nor Destiny be told
By flapping Pinions.—Soon the Day shall come,
When, other Oracles supprest and dumb, 290

Temples shall rise in Honour of thy Art,
And thy Responses ready Priests impart.

Such solemn Dirges with due Rev'rence paid
To the prophetic Monarch's honour'd Shade,
In Lieu of Rites funereal *Greece* bestows 295

And gives his wand'ring Ghost the wish'd Repose,
Then were their Souls unman'd with wild Affright.

And all with equal Horror loath the Fight.

Thus when some skilful Pilot yields his Breath,
The Crew desponding at his sudden Death, 300

‘ rona virgaque vaticinari cœpit et subito nusquam comparuit. Tem-
‘ plum ei factum est quod Branchiadon nominatur et Apollini Phi-
‘ lesio pariter consecrata sunt templa, quæ ab osculo Branchi, sive
‘ certamine puerorum, Philesia nuncupantur’

v. 299. *Thus, when*] *Statius* varies his Similes with all possible Art, sometimes deriving them from the animal Creation, sometimes from the Passions of Mankind, and sometimes from the vulgar Scenes and Occurrences of Life; but wherever we follow him, we find him a faithful Copier of Nature. This before us, trifling and unworthy of Notice as it may appear to some for its Brevity, is notwithstanding very just, and answers in every Point to the Thing described with the utmost Precision and Propriety. Nothing in Nature could be more happily conceived, than the comparing *Amphiarus*, who was the Guide and Oracle of his People, to the Pilot of a Ship.

Their

Their Oars seem short of half their wonted Force,
And the fresh Gale less aidful to their Course.
But Converse long indulg'd had eas'd their Smart,
And dull'd each quick Sensation of the Heart,
When Sleep, unnotic'd, stole to their Relief, 305
And hush'd the Voice, and clos'd the Eye of Grief.
Not so the joyful *Thebans* spent the Night ;
But, favour'd by the Stars and *Phæbe*'s Light,
In the throng'd Streets and Houses, madly gay,
With various Sports they chac'd the Hours away. 310
Each Centinel lay dozing at his Post,
And senseless Riot reign'd thro' all the Host.
In antic Measures some obliquely bound
To the hoarse Drum's and tinkling Cymbal's Sound,
While others pipe, and swell the mellow Flute, 315
Or sing in Concert with the shrill-ton'd Lute
Their Gods propitious, and in Order name
The Deities, whose Favours Worship claim.
Pæans arise to ev'ry Pow'r divine,
And the crown'd Goblets foam with sparkling Wine.
They ridicule the *Grecian* Augur's Death, 321
And, as in seeming Contrast, spend their Breath
In Praise of their *Tiresias*. Now they sing
The Feats and Prowess of each ancient King,
Thebes from its Origin celestial trace, 325
Jove and *Europa* mixing in Embrace,
And boast, how on his Back the Damsel rode,
And grasp'd his Horns, unconscious of the God :
Of *Cadmus*, the tir'd Heifer, and the Field,
That erst was seen an Iron Crop to yield : 330
Of Rocks that follow'd when *Amphion* strung
His *Theban* Lyre, and dancing Groves they sung.

While

While others celebrate in equal Strains
Harmonia, bound in Hymenæal Chains,
Or tune to pregnant *Semele* their Lays : 335
None want a Fable for a Theme of Praise.
While thus the genial Banquet they prolong
In friendly Guise, and urge th' unfinish'd Song,
The Son of *Laius*, long conceal'd, forsakes
His gloomy Cell, and social Bliss partakes. 340
No wonted Filth was on his Vifage seen,
Unruffled was his Brow, his Look serene.
Such Wonder would arise, should *Bacchus* show
Barbaric Trophies, and his *Indian* Foe,
Brought from the Banks of mix'd *Hydaspes*, grac'd 345
With Beds of Gems, and orient Realms laid waste.
His Friends' Address with Courtesy he bore,
Nor shunn'd their proffer'd Solace as before ;
But cleans'd his Cheeks of Gore, approv'd the Food,
And Life's long-unexperienc'd Joys renew'd. 350
E'en *Oedipus* in Mirth and Converse gay
Assum'd a Part, who late was known to pray
To *Pluto*, and the Sister-Fiends alone,
Or at his Daughter's Feet to pour his Moan.
Yet latent was the Cause. The Palm of Fight, 355
Gain'd by his Country, gave him no Delight;
The War was all he wish'd. To this his Son
He spurr'd, nor car'd by whom the Day was won.
But first with tacit Vows he view'd the Sword,
And all the Seeds of Wickedness explor'd. 360

v. 345. *Hydaspes*] A River that rises in the most northern Part of *India* toward the Mountain *Imaus*, and falls into the *Indus*, in Allusion to which Circumstance, I have given it the Epithet *mix'd*.

Hence smil'd upon his Aspect Peace unknown,
And the Feast pleas'd with Merit not its own.
Thus *Phineus*, when, his Limbs with Hunger worn,
And the last Period of his Torture borne,
His Palace freed from Harpies he perceiv'd, 365
Incredulous his Rescue disbeliev'd ;
Then gave a Loose to Joy, as long unstain'd,
His Vessels, Beds and costly Board remain'd.
Stretch'd in their Tents the *Grecian* Cohorts lay,
And lost in Sleep the Labours of the Day : 370
All but *Adraustus* ; he, consign'd by Fate
To watchful Cares, the Curse of regal State,
With Horror heard, unknowing the Repose
His Age requir'd, the Revels of his Foes.
He sickens at the Trumpet's brazen Sound, 375
And Shouts of haughty Triumph that rebound

v. 363. *Thus Phineus, ruben his Limbs*] *Phineus* was a King of *Arcadia*, who, having at the Instigation of his Queen, put out the Eyes of his Children by a former Wife, was himself struck blind by *Jupiter*, who sent the Harpies to punish him ; but directing the *Argonauts* in their Way to *Colchis*, they, in Return, drove away the Harpies. *Valerius Flaccus*, who has expatiated on this Fable in his *Argonautics*, has the following beautiful Lines on *Phineus*'s Joy and Astonishment on being delivered from those rapacious Animals.

Ipse inter medios. ceu dulcis imagine somni
Lætus, ad ciblitæ Cereris suspirat honores.

B. 5.

v. 373. *With Horror heard*] *Homer* opens the tenth Book of his *Iliad* with a similiar Description of the Distresses *Agamemnon* laboured under the Night after his Defeat by the *Trojans*. The following Lines seem to have given our Author the Hint of the six Verses before us.

Τρομέοντο δὲ οἱ φρένες ἐντὰς,
"Ητοι ὅτ' εἰς πεδίον τὸ Τρωϊκὸν ἀθρόσειε,
Θλύμαζεν τυρὰν πολλὰ, τὰ καίστο Ιλιόθι πρό,
Αὐλῶν, συειγίων τὸν πότνιον, ὅμαδόν τε ἀνθρώπων.

From

BOOK VIII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 371

From echoing Rocks. The Pipe augments his Fears,
Dwells on his Thoughts, and grates his loathing Ears.
Then from his Camp, desponding, he surveys
Their wav'ring Torches, and triumphal Blaze. 380

Thus when the Fury of the Tempest past,
The Vessel drives with an indulgent Blast,
Secure, and trusting to the settled Deep,
The Mariners refresh their Limbs in Sleep;
And all, unmindful of their Office, nod, 385
Save the pale Master, and his painted God.

Now *Sol*'s fair Sister, viewing from afar
His Courfers yoak'd, and ready for the Car,
(While Ocean roar'd beneath the rushing Day,
And redden'd with *Aurora*'s orient Ray,) 390

Collects her Beams, recalls her scatter'd Light,
And with her Whip compells the Stars to Flight.
When, ever on the public Welfare bent,
Adraustus summon'd to his royal Tent

The *Grecian* Peers, the Question in Debate, 395
Who should succeed Interpreter of Fate,
On whom the Wreaths and Tripods should devolve,
And who could best their Oracles resolve.

Scarce had they met, when with united Voice
On fam'd *Thiodamas* they fix'd their Choice, 400
To whom *Ampbiaraus* oft reveal'd
The Mysteries of Heav'n, nor blush'd to yield
Invidious of his Art, a Share of Fame,
But own'd his Merit, and approv'd his Claim.

v. 386. *And his painted God*] It was a Custom among the Ancients to name their Ships from some particular Gods, whom they looked upon as tutelary Patrons to them, and paint their Images upon the Stern.

372 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book VIII.

Such unexpected Honours much confound 405
 The Youth, for Modesty as Skill renown'd :
 With Awe unfeign'd he views the proffer'd Leaves,
 Mistrusts his Art, and scarce the Charge receives.
 As when some Youth of royal Blood succeeds
 To his paternal Crown, and rules the *Medes*, 410
 (More safe, had Fate prolong'd his Father's Life)
 With Diffidence he treads the Path of Strife ;
 Much from th' aspiring Temper of his Peers,
 And from the Vulgar's headstrong Will he fears,
 Doubtful with whom his wide Domain to share, 415
 Whom make a Partner of imperial Care.
 His slender Grasp, he fears, will ill contain
 The weighty Sceptre, and his bow sustain,
 And trembling takes the Courier's Reins in Hand,
 And huge *Tiara*, Badge of high Command. 420
 Soon as a Chaplet for his Brow he twin'd,
 And in a Wreath his flowing Locks confin'd,
 With Shouts triumphant thro' the Camp he went,
 And, as a Specimen of his Intent
 To serve the Public, piously prepares 425
 Earth to propitiate with due Rites and Pray'rs.
 Nor useleſs to the *Greeks* the Scheme appear'd.
 First then two Altars on the Champaign rear'd,
 With Turf high-heap'd, and Ever-greens he grac'd,
 And various Flow'rs, in decent Order plac'd, 430

v. 418. *And his Bow sustain*] The Bow was borne by the *Perſian* Kings as an Ensign of Royalty, as we learn from *Dio*, Book 49, who informs us, that the Ambassadors sent by *Mark Anthony* to *Pbraates* found him fitting on a Throne of Gold, and playing on his Bow-string with his Fingers, as I think the Words, Την ροπαν τοξη φελλων, signify.

The

The Goddess's own Gift. On these he threw,
Whate'er the vernal Rays of *Sol* renew
On her green Surface: last he pour'd a Bowl
Of purest Milk, and thus confirms the whole.

O bland Creatress of the Gods above, 435

And Men beneath, from whose omnific Love
The Woods are clad with Verdure, Rivers flow,
And Animals with Life's warm Current glow;
Hail, fairest Part of the material World,
From whom arose the Stones by *Pyrrha* hurl'd, 440
Promethean Arts, and Food for human Kind,
Improv'd by Change, with various Arts refin'd.
Old Ocean rests sustain'd on thy Embrace,

Thy wide Extent contains the finny Race,
The feather'd Kind, and Savage in his Lair: 445
Round thee, the Prop of Worlds, in vacant Air
Sublimely pois'd the swift Machine of Heav'n,
And the bright Cars by *Sol* and *Luna* driv'n,
Whose Lights alternate gild the Star-pav'd Pole,
In Motion annual and diurnal roll. 450

Canst thou, who, situate in the Midst of Things,
And undivided by the Brother-Kings,
So many Towns and Nations far and wide,
From thy vast Store with Nourishment supply'd,

v. 435. *O bland Creatress*] The Poet has confirmed the Character of *Thiodamas* by this beautiful Hymn to the Earth. There is a genuine classical Simplicity in it not without a Mixture of Grandeur that none but *Homer* and *Callimachus* were truly Masters of, except our *Milton*, whose Stile and Manner of Hymn-writing approach very near to our Author's.

v. 452. *And undivided*] *Statius* alludes here to the Hemistick in the fifteenth Book of the *Iliad*, where *Neptune*, speaking of the Division of the World between *Jupiter*, *Pluto* and himself, says,

Γαῖα δὲ τις ξυνὴ παῖδες.

Alone and unassisted dost sustain, 455

And *Atlas*, who without thee toils in vain
Beneath th' Incumbent Atmosphere, his Care,
Us only of thy Sons refuse to bear?

Why, Goddess, dost thou murmur at our Weight?

O say, what Crime has merited thy Hate? 460

Is it, because a foreign Birth we boast,
The wretched Natives of th' *Inachian* Coast?

Our Country lies in ev'ry Tract of Earth:

Nor should'st thou these or those, as void of Worth,

Mark out for Vengeance, or extraneous call, 465

Since thou'rt alike the Mother of us all.

Common to all alike may'st thou remain,

Nor grudge, that ought but *Thebans* press thy Plain.

Still in the Chance of War, and Course of Fate

May we expire, not whelm'd thro' sudden Hate 470

Snatch not our breathing Bodies, ere they lie

On the known Pile, but give us Time to die.

Soon shall we come the Path that all must tread,

When Destiny has cut the fatal Thread.

O stop the moving Field, nor thus prevent 475

The Sisters' Hands, but to our Pray'r's relent.

But thou, whom dear to Heav'n no *Theban* Hand

Depriv'd of vital Breath, nor hostile Brand,

But Nature, who prepar'd a Bed of Rest

Between her Arms, and snatch'd thee to her Breast, 480

As if, in Recompence, she would bestow

A Burial-Place on *Cyrrba*'s sacred Brow:

Conciliate to the Gods thy wretched Friend,

And let a Portion of thy Skill descend

To guide my Breast. Whate'er thou didst prepare 485

To teach our grieving Host, to me declare.

As thy Interpreter, to thee I'll pay
 My Vows, in Absence of the God of Day.
 The Place that snatch'd thee hence, is more divine
 Than *Cyrrha*, *Delos*, or the God's own Shrine. 490
 This said, in Earth he plung'd the sable Herd,
 And Sheep, for their black Fleeces much preferr'd :
 Then o'er them heap'd the Sand. Such Rites they paid
 For fun'ral Honours to the Prophet's Shade.
 Thus toil'd the *Greeks*, when in the brazen Sound 495
 Of Swords, and martial Horns their Shouts are drown'd.
 The Queen of Furies from *Theumesus*' Height
 Her Tresses shook, and rais'd the Din of Fight ;
 She mingled Hissings with the Clarion's Tone,
 And the Trump breath'd a Clangour yet unknown. 500
Cithaeron starts astonish'd, and the Quire
 Of Tow'r's that danc'd to great *Amphion*'s Lyre.
 Now stern *Bellona* thunders at each Gate,
 To wake the War, and act the Will of Fate.
 The sounding Hinges ring, as they unfold : 505
 The Waves of People to the Passage roll'd,
 As if the *Grecians* press'd them from behind ;
 Horse mix with Foot, and clashing Chariots join'd.
 Long in th' entangling Entrance they remain,
 And view the Field, they strove to reach in vain. 510

v. 491. *In Earth*] The Ancients always sacrificed black Animals to the Earth : thus *Homer* in the 3d Book of the *Iliad*.

Οἴστε δὲ τὸν ἔτερον λευκὸν, ἵτερον δὲ μέλαναν,
 Γῆτε καὶ Ἡλίον.

Of which (says the old Scholiast) the white Lamb was sacrificed to the Sun as the Father of Light, and the black one to the Earth, as being the Mother and Nurse of Mankind.

Creon

Creon by Lot from the Ogygian goes ;
 Neitæ then Eteoiles disclose :
 The Hamoloides Hæmon occupies ;
 Thro' Hypseus to the Plain Prætides flies :
 Next thro' Electræ warlike Dryas takes 515
 His Way ; Eurymedon Hypsistæ shakes.
 The Gate of Dirce for a while retards,
 Then frees the brave Menæceus with his Guards.
 Thus when the Nile with Heav'ns descending Show'rs,
 And eastern Snows retrieves his leſſ'ning Pow'rs, 520
 Impatient of th' Increase, imbib'd with Force,
 And foaming o'er he bursts his latent Source,
 Then disembogues his Burden in the Main,
 And from sev'n Mouths o'erflows the neighb'ring Plain.
 While to their Caves the routed Nymphs retreat, 525
 Nor even dare their native River meet.
 Mean while th' Inachian Youths, and Spartan Bands
 With those who cultivate Elæan Lands,

v. 511. *From the Ogygian]* Lactantius in his Notes on our Author, esteems this dull Enumeration of the Theban Gates as a striking Elegancy : but, I confess, I fear it is Folly to have translated it. Dry, however, and uninteresting as it is, I doubt not but there are many Lovers of Antiquity, who extoll Statius to the Skies for having handed down to Posterity such a considerable Piece of useful Knowledge. All I request of the Reader with Respect to it is, that he will not blame the Dullness of the Translator, since he could not have been faithful to the Original without being so.

v. 519. *Thus when]* The Poet has in this Comparison descended to the Minutiae of Exactness ; but the Delicacy of the Allusion, which may possibly escape the Observation of the Generality of our Readers, is the Correspondence of the seven Mouths of the Nile to the seven Gates of Thebes : for as each of the former discharges a Torrent of Water, so from each of the latter a Band of Warriors issues to the Field of Combat.

And

And *Pylos*, seek the Battle, sadly slow,
 And drooping with the Weight of recent Woe; 530
 Nor willing yet *Thiodamas* obey,
 Depriv'd of their late Prophet's gentle Sway.
 Nor, Prince of Augurs, does thy Cohort boast
 Alone of thee: the universal Host
 Defective seems, as thro' the Wings of Fight 535
 Thy Successor appears excell'd in Height.
 Thus should some envious Cloud secrete a Star
 From the fair Groupe that forms the northern Car,
 Short of its Complement, the mangled Wain
 Would scarce be known, and Seamen gaze in vain. 540
 But see! fresh Labours to the Poet rise,
 And War unsung demands the God's Supplies:
 Another *Phœbus* then attune my Lyre,
 A greater Muse the growing Song inspire.
 The fatal Hour arrives so rashly sought, 545
 With Horror, Sorrow, Blood and Carnage fraught;

v. 537. *Thus should*] This Simile likewise has all the Precision and Justness of the former: the seven Captains being represented by the seven Stars in Charles's Wain.

v. 541. *But see! fresh Labours*] *Statius* is not the only Author who has renewed his Invocation to the Deities who preside over Poetry, at the Middle of his Book, when he is going to enter upon a different Subject.

Nunc age, qui reges, Erato, &c.

Tu vatem, tu diva mone: &c.

Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo,

Majus opus moveo.

Virgil, *AEn. Lib. 7.*

And *Milton* likewise;

Descend from Heav'n, *Urania*, &c.

Half yet remains unsung, &c.

Par. Loft, B. 7.

An

And Death, from Chains and *Stygian* Darkness freed,
 Enjoys the Light, and stalking o'er the Mead,
 Expands his Jaws, and to his Arms invites
 The Men of Worth, but vulgar Triumphs flights. 550

He marks the Chiefs who most deserve their Life,
 The first in Arms, and foremost in the Strife ;
 Of these, scarce number'd with the mighty dead,
 The Fiends rapacious snatch the vital Thread.

Mars occupies the Centre of the Field, 555

His Javelin dry ; where'er he turns his Shield,
 The fatal Touch erases from the Mind
 Wives, Children, Home, and leaves a Blank behind.
 The Love of Life too flies among the rest,

The last that lingers in the human Breast. 560

Wrath sits suspended on their thirsty Spears,
 And half unsheathe'd each angry Blade appears.

Their Helmets tremble, formidably gay
 With nodding Crests, and shed a gleamy Ray.

Loud beat their daring Hearts against the Mails : 565

Nor wonder we, with Men the God prevails ;
 The very Steeds with warlike Ardour glow,
 And snow-white Show'rs of Foam the Plain o'erflow.
 They champ the Bit, or neighing paw the Ground,
 And bound and prance at the shrill Trumpet's Sound,
 As if their Rider's Soul transfus'd inspires 571

Their Breasts with equal and congenial Fires.

v. 347. *And Death*] We are here dazled and confounded with a Variety of Scenes, and Complication of Imagery. What can be more grand and magnificent than the Prelude to this Battle. We see Death let loose from Hell, and striding with open Mouth over the Field, *Mars* spiriting the Soldiers, and with the Touch of his Shield infusing a Forgetfulness of all domestic Connections, and the very Horses seemingly voluntary in their Master's Service.

When

When now they rush, thick Clouds of Dust arise
From either Part encountering in the Skies.

As they advance, the middle Space between 575
Grows less, till scarce an Interval is seen.

Now Front to Front oppos'd in just Array,
The closing Hosts with Groans commence the Fray:
Sword is repell'd by Sword, Shields clash on Shields,
Foot presses Foot, and Lance to Lances yields. 580
Their Helmets almost join, and mingling Rays,
Alternately reflect each other's Blaze.

Beauteous as yet the Face of War appears,
No Helms uncrested, and no broken Spears;
Without a Flaw the deepning Lines remain, 585
Their Belts and Bucklers shine without a Stain:
Fair hung the Quiver at the Warrior's Side;
Nor did one Chariot stand without a Guide.
But when stern Valour, prodigal of Life,
And Wrath arose, increasing with the Strife, 590

v. 575. *As they advance, the middle*] These are good Lines, though I cannot think them equal to the following.

For now
'Twixt Host and Host a narrow Space was left,
A dreadful Interval, and Front to Front
Presented stood in terrible Array
Of hideous Length: Par. Loft, B. 6. 103.

v. 579. *Sword is*] The Lines in the Original, *viz.*

Jam clypeus clypeis, umbone repellitur umbo,
Ense minax ensis, pede pes & euspide cuspis.

Are imitated (says Mr. Pope) very happily from the following Lines in the fourth Book of the *Iliad*, Verse 446.

Οι δ' ὅτε δῆρ' ἐσ χῶρον ἔνε ξυνιόντες ἵκοντο,
Σύν δ' ἐθαλον ῥυτές, σὺν δ' ἐγχειρ, Ε μέντε ἄγδρων
Χαλκεοθωρήκων ἀτὰρ ἀστίδες ὄμφαλοσοτα
Ἐπληγή τ' ἀλλήλοις

Darts

Darts thrown aloft with swift Succession glare,
 Glow in the Whirl, and hiss along the Air :
 A Cloud of Arrows intercepts the Skies,
 Scarce can the crowded Heav'ns for more suffice.

Not with such Force the flaky Sheets of Snow 595

Descend on *Rhodope*'s aërial Brow :

Great was the Crash, as when from either Pole
Jove bares his Arm, and bids the Thunder roll :
 Thus roars the Storm when gloomy *Boreas* pours
 The Hail on *Lybian* Sands in rattling Show'rs. 600
 Some fall by sent, some by returning Spears,
 And present Death in various Forms appears,
 With Stakes, in Lieu of Javelins, they engage,
 And mutual Blows are dealt with mutual Rage.

Their whizzing Slings a stony Tempest rain ; 605

The Bullets flash, like Lightning, o'er the Plain.

A double Fate is lodg'd in ev'ry Dart,
 And, the Steel failing, Poison saps the Heart.

No random Weapons fly without a Wound ;
 The Press so thick, they cannot reach the Ground. 610
 Oft ignorant they kill, and fall in Fight,
 And Fortune does the Work of val'rous Might.
 They gain and lose with swift Vicissitude
 The well-fought Ground, pursuing and pursu'd.

v. 594, *Not with such Force*] The Reader may compare this with the following, quoted from *Virgil's Aeneid*, Book 9. Verse 668.

Quantus ab occasu veniens pluvialibus hædis
 Verberat imber humum : quam multâ grandine nimbi
 In vada precipitant cum Jupiter horridus austris
 Torquet aquosam hyemem, & cœlo cava nubila rumpit.

II. 95
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Book VIII. STADIUS's THEBAID. 381

As when great *Jove* of adverse Winds and Storms, 615
To vex the World, a double Tempest forms ;
The Skies and Surges waver with the Blast,
Which then prevails, and still obey the last ;
Till the light Clouds with driving *Auster* sweep,
Or stronger *Boreas* rules the wat'ry Deep. 620

Asopian Hypseus first the Slaughter led,
And slew *Menalcas* at his People's Head,
Th' *Oebalians* proud ; who, wedg'd in firm Array
With close-compacted Shields, had forc'd their Way
Thro' the *Eubœan* Ranks : their mightiest slain, 625
They swerv'd aside and sorrowing quit the Plain.
He, a rough Native of the rapid Flood,
A *Spartan* both in Nature and by Blood,
Back thro' his Bowels drew the thrilling Dart,
That quiver'd in his Bosom near his Heart, 630
(Lest in his Back by sinking deeper found,
His Troops should deem it a dishonest Wound.)
Then at his Foe the Weapon faintly threw,
The bloody Weapon unavailing flew.
Here end the rural Sports of the deceas'd, 635
His Wars, and Stripes that erst his Mother pleas'd.

v. 615.. *As when great Jove*] So *Silius Italicus*, L. 4.

Hac pontum vice (ubi exercet discordia ventos)
Fert *Boreas*, Eurisque refert, molemque profundi,
Nunc huc alterno, nunc illuc flamine gestant.

v. 636. *And Stripes that erst his Mother pleas'd*] *Orestes* having transported the Image of *Diana* from *Scythia* into *Sparta*, and that Goddess being only placable with human Blood, left the divine Vengeance should be incurred by an Intermission of Sacrifice, and that their Cruelty might not excite the *Greeks* to a Rebellion, they inured their Children to undergo a severe Scourging with a Kind of emulous Patience and Fortitude, till the Blood gushed out in such a Quantity as might appease the cruel Goddess. *Tertullian* in his *Proem to his Lives of the Martyrs* gives much the same Account:

‘ Nam

At *Phædimus Amyntas* lifts his Bow ;
 When (ah ! how swift the Sisters wing the Blow)
 Supine the Chief lies panting on the Ground,
 Ere the recoiling String had ceas'd to sound. 640

On *Phegeus* next a forceful Stroke descends,
 And his right Arm from off the Shoulder rends.
 Long trembling on the Pain the Member stay'd,
 Nor from its faithful Grasp dismiss'd the Blade ;
Acetes view'd with Horror, as it lay 645
 'Midst other Arms, and lopp'd the Hand away.

Stern *Athamas* his furious Lance impell'd
 At *Iphis*, angry *Pheres Abas* fell'd ;
 The Sword of savage *Hypseus Argus* found :
 They lay, lamenting each a diff'rent Wound. 650

Rapt in a Chariot, *Abas* fought the Mead ;
Argus on Foot : but *Iphis* rein'd a Steed.
 Two *Theban* Twins together rang'd the Field,
 In Casques, the fatal Mask of War, conceal'd ;
 These, as along the Paths of Fight they sped, 655

Two Twins of *Argos* mingled with the dead :
 But when each kindred Feature they descry'd,
 As to despoil them of their Arms they try'd ;

' Nam quod hodie apud Lacedæmonios solemnitas maxima est
 ' Διαμαρτυρίων [i. e. Flagellatio] non latet. In quo sacro ante aram
 ' nobiles quique adolescentes flagellis affliguntur astantibus paren-
 ' tibus & propinquis & uti perseverent adhortantibus.'

v. 637. At *Phædimus*] As the perpetual Horror of Combats and a Succession of Images of Slaughter could not but tire the Reader in the Course of a long Work, *Stadius* has endeavoured to remedy this Defect by a constant Variety in the Deaths of his Heroes. These he distinguishes several Ways : sometimes by the Characters of the Men, their Age, Office, Profession, Nation and Family, sometimes by the Difference of their Wounds, and at others by the several Postures and Attitudes in which his Warriors are described either falling or fighting.

They

They gaze upon each other, and bemoan
The cruel Lot, that soon may be their own. 660
Unhappy *Daphnis* by fierce *Ion* bleeds,
Who took Advantage of his headstrong Steeds :
Jove smiles in Triumph, *Phæbus* mourns in vain ;
This dwelt at *Pisa*, that on *Cyrrha*'s Plain.
Two Chiefs above the rest were mark'd with Fame ; 665
By Fortune, Heroes of distinguish'd Name ;
Fierce *Hæmon* chac'd the *Grecians* o'er the Field,
The *Theban* Troops to raging *Tydeus* yield :
In him *Alcides* gen'rous Heat instills,
Him *Pallas* fires,—Thus from their echoing Hills 670

v. 670. *Thus from their echoing Hills*] I shall take this Opportunity of presenting my Readers with three very fine Similies from three different Authors ; the last of which is perhaps as pompous, copious, picturesque, not to say every Way poetical, as ever was drawn from this Part of the Creation.

Ut torrens celsi præceps è vertice Pindi
Cum sonitu ruit ad campum, magnoque furore
Convulsum montis volvit latus, obvia passim
Armenta, immanesque feræ, sylvæque trahuntur.
Spumea faxofis clamat convallibus unda.

Silius Italicus de Bello Punico, Lib. 4.

Con quel furor, che'l re de fumi altiero,
Quando rompe tal volta argini e sponde,
E che nei campi Ocnei s' apre il sentiero,
Ei grassi solchi, e le biade feconde,
E con le sue Capanne il gregge intiero,
E coi cani i pastor porta nell' onde.

Ariosto's Orlan. Furioso, Canto 40.

Comme un voit un Torrent du haut des Pirennées,
Menacer des vallons les nymphes consternées ;
Cent digues qu'on oppose a ses flots orageux,
Soutiennent quelque temps son choc impetueux
Mas bientot renversant sa Barriere impuissante,
Il porte au loin le bruit, la mort, & l'epouvante ;
Deracine en passant ces chenes orgueilleux.
Qui bravoient les hivers, & qui touchoient les cieux.

Detache

Two Torrents rush, increas'd with wintry Rains,
 And pour a double Ruin on the Plains,
 Contending, who should highest overflow
 The Bridge, or soonest lay the Forest low ;
 Till some strait Vale unites their watry Force, 675
 And joins their Streams in one continu'd Course ;
 Then, Ocean near, they labour to disjoin
 Their Currents, ere they mingle with the Brine.
 Bold *Idas* issu'd thro' the middle Fight,
 And wav'd a Torch that shed a smoaky Light : 680
 The Warrior's Frolic struck his Foes with Fear ;
 They shun'd his Sight, and left the Passage clear :
 But *Tydeus*' Lance pursu'd him, as he sped,
 Tore off his Helm, and pierc'd his naked Head.
 Supine the Giant lay, the barbed Spear 685
 Stands fix'd upon his Forehead. Round his Ear,
 And Temple swift the curling Flames arise,
 When *Tydeus* thus in Triumph boasting cries.
 O call not *Argos* cruel in Return
 For this thy fun'ral Pile ; in Quiet burn. 690
 As the gaunt Wolf, pleas'd with the first Essay
 Of Slaughter, flies, uncloy'd to make a Prey

Detache les rochers du pendant des montagnes,
 Et poursuit les troupeaux fuant dans les campagnes.

Voltaire's *Henr. Chant. 6.*

v. 691. *As the gaunt Wolf*] *Tasso* has paraphrased this.

Come dal chiuso ovil cacciato viene
 Lupo tal'or, che fugge, e si nasconde ;
 Che se ben del gran ventre omai ripiene
 Ha l' ingorde voragine profonde.
 Avido pur di sanguo anco fuor tiene
 La lingua, e'el fugge dalla labra immonde ;
 Tal'ei sen gia dopo il sanguigno Stratio
 Della sua cupa fame anco non satio.

Cieur. Lib. Canto 10. Stanza 2.

Of

Of the whole Flock. Thus rush'd the vengeful Son
Of Oeneus to compleat the Task begun.

Brave *Aon* perish'd by a well-aim'd Stone ; 695
His Sword hew'd *Pholus* and bold *Chromis* down.

The Sons of *Mæra* sunk to nether Night
Beneath his piercing Dart, whom in Despite
Of *Venus*, once her Patroness, she bare :

Mean Time the Matron wearies Heav'n with Pray'r.
Nor with less Wrath infatiate *Haemon* glows, 701

But dies the Ground with Purple as he goes ;
In ev'ry Quarter of the Field engag'd,

But mostly where the thickest Combate rag'd.
At length as on he sped, tho' short of Breath, 705

Yet still unwearied with the Work of Death ;
He falls on *Butes*, who address'd his Host

To dare the threatned Shock, nor quit their Post :
On the fair Youth, unknowing whence it came,

Descends the Pole-Ax with unerring Aim, 710
And cleaves his Temples, grac'd with youthful Charms ;
His Locks divided fall upon his Arms.

The crimson Life gush'd upward from the Wound ;
Prone falls the Chief, and falling spurns the Ground.

Polites then beneath his Falchion bow'd, 715
And *Hypanis*, who long unshorn had vow'd

v. 716. *Who long unshorn had vow'd*] Their letting their Hair grow to a great Length, and dedicating it to the Gods was esteemed a principal Act of Religion by the Ancients. Thus we find *Achilles* consecrated his Hair to the River *Sperchius* in Order to procure himself and Friend a safe Return from *Troy*.

"Ενθ' αὖτ' ἄλλ' σύνοίσε ποδάρκης δέθο αὐχλαῖεύς,
Στασ' αἴπανευθε πυρῆς ξανθὴν αἴπεκεισατο χαίτην,
Σὺ δέ Σπρχειών ποταμῶν τρέφε τηλεθόωσαν.

386 STADIUS THEBAID. Book VIII.

Their Hair to *Bacchus*, and the God of Day :
 Yet neither came to drive the Pest away.
 To these the Warrior *Hyperenor* join'd,
 And *Damasus*, who fain would have declin'd, 720
 Th' unequal Conflict ; but the Spear he threw,
 Athwart his Breast, and thro' his Shoulders flew ;
 From his tenacious Grasp the Buckler tore,
 And on its Point in seeming Triumph bore.
 Much more had *Haemon* too that Day atchiev'd, 725
 The Pow'r assisting ; but *Minerva* griev'd
 For her slain *Greeks*, and to his Wrath oppos'd
Oenides.—Now the God and Goddess clos'd
 In Converse mutual, when *Alcmene*'s Son,
 Peace at his Heart, serenely thus begun. 730
 Say, faithful Sister, by what Fortune driv'n,
 We meet in Battle ? has the Queen of Heav'n,
 For ever studious in promoting Ill,
 Devis'd this Scheme ?—whatever is thy Will,
 Let that be done : much sooner I'd withstand 735
 The Wrath of Heav'n, and brave the Thund'r's
 Hand.

Dear as my *Haemon* is, him I disown,
 If *Pallas* favours Heroes of her own.
 No more with thee in any Mortal's Cause
 I combate, tho' thy favour'd *Tydeus* draws 740
 On *Hyllus*, or should menace with his Spear
Amphitryon, recent from the nether Sphere.
 Fresh in my Mind thy Favours I retain ;
 How oft (when o'er the spacious Earth and Main

v. 741. On *Hyllus*] *Hyllus* and *Amphitryon* were his Sons by *Omphale*.

v. 743. Fresh in my Mind thy Favours] In the eighth Book of the *Iliad*,

Book VIII. STADIUS's THEBAID. 387

I roam'd) that Hand upheld me in the Fray, 745

And Jove's own *Ægis* gave my Arm the Day.

With me the Realms of *Styx* thou hadst explor'd,

Could *Acheron* to Gods Acces afford.

To thee my Rank and Place in Heav'n I owe,

My Sire, and more than I can utter now. 750

Then act thy Will on *Thebes*, — To thee I yield

The sole Command, and Guidance of the Field.

This said, he strode away.—His Words assuage

The Wrath of *Pallas*, and appease her Rage.

Her Anger past, the wonted Smiles return; 755

The Snakes subside, her Eyes desist to burn.

The Warrior, conscious that the God retir'd,

No more with Strength endu'd, with Ardour fir'd,

With faint Effort whirls round his useless Brand,

Nor in one Stroke descries his Patron's Hand. 760

Would Pride and Shame permit, he fain would fly:

He blushes to retreat, yet fears to die.

Oenides urges his retreating Foe;

And brandishing what no one else could throw,

Directs His Arm, where 'twixt his Helm and Shield,

The joining Throat and Neck a Passage yield. 766

Nor err'd his Hand, but *Pallas* chose to spare

The hapless Youth, and made his Life her Care.

Iliad, *Pallas* mentions Jove's Ingratitude in not rewarding her for the Services she had done his Son *Hercules* at his Request, when distressed by the Artifice of *Juno*.

v. 756. *The Snakes subside*] The Poet must here allude to the Snakes on *Medusa*'s Head, depictedure on *Jupiter's* *Ægis*, which *Pallas* generally carried about her.

Αμφὶ δὲ ἄρε ἄμειον βάλετ' Αἰγίδα θυσανόεσσαν
Δειγλω, ἐν τοι μὲν πάντη φόβον ἐσεφύνωτο.

Ἐν δὲ τοις, τοι δὲ ἀλλοὶ, τοι δὲ κρυόεσσας ιακῆ.

Ἐν δὲ τοις, τοι δὲ ἀλλοὶ, τοι δὲ κρυόεσσας ιακῆ. *Iliad* 5: Ver. 738.

388 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book VIII.

The Dart, diverted from its destin'd Course,
His Shoulder graz'd, and spent in Air its Force. 770
A Fate so near him chills his Soul with Dread ;
At once his Fortitude and Vigour fled.
No more he dares prolong th' unequal Fight,
But even sickens at the Hero's Sight.
Thus; when some Hunter's Spear has drawn the Gore
From the tough Forehead of a bristled Boar, 776
But lightly raz'd the Skin, nor reach'd the Brain ;
The daunted Savage wheels around with Pain,
Grinding his Tusks, or stands aloof thro' Fear,
Nor tempts again the Fury of his Spear. 780
Long had brave *Prothous* with unerring Hand
Dealt out his Shafts, and gall'd the *Grecian* Band.
This *Tydeus* saw, and rushing at the Foe
And his gay Courser aim'd a double Blow.
On him, as prone he tumbles on the Plains, 785
Falls the pierc'd Steed, and, while he seeks the Reins,
Stamps on the Helm', till by his Feet com prest
On his Lord's Face, it crush'd his shielded Breast ;
Then spouting out amidst a purple Tide
The Bit, expir'd recumbent at his Side. 790
Thus often on the Cloud-supporting Crown
Of *Gaurus*, Vine and Helm are both o'erthrown,
A double Damage to the Swain : but most
Th' uxorious Elm bewails his Confort lost ;
Nor groans so much for his own hapless Fate, 795
As for the Grapes he presses with his Weight.
Choræbus, Comrade of the Nine, forsook
His native Mount, and the *Castalian* Brook ;
Though oft *Urania* from th' inspected Stars 799
Forewarn'd his Death, and bade him shun the Wars :

Heedless

Heedless he mixes with the daring Throng,
And, while he meditates the future Song,
Becomes himself a Theme of public Praise.
The Sisters weep, forgetful of their Lays.

Swol'n with ambitious Hopes, young *Atys* came 805
From *Phocian Cyrrha* to the Field of Fame,
To fair *Ismene* from his tender Age
Espous'd; nor did her Father's impious Rage,
Or the neglected Beauties of her Face,
The Idol Fair-One in his Eyes disgrace. 810

Nor in her Turn the Damsel disproves,
His faultless Person; mutual were their Loves.
But War forbids their Nuptials; hence arose
The Champion's Hatred to his *Argive* Foes.

He shines the foremost in the deathful Scene, 815
And lab'ring to be notic'd by his Queen,
Now wars on Foot, and now with loosen'd Reins,
And foaming Horses pours along the Plains.
His doating Mother deck'd his am'rous Breast,
And graceful Shoulders with a purple Vest. 820
His Arms and Trappings were emboss'd with Gold,
Lest he should seem less glorious to behold
Than his fair Spouse.—On these the Chief rely'd,
And the stern *Greeks* to single Fight defy'd.

The weakest of his Enemies subdu'd, 825
And none attack'd, who were not first pursu'd,
Trembling he bears their Trophies to his Train,
And with his Troops, inglorious, herds again.

v. 827. *He bears the Trophies*] This Passage gives us an Insight into the antient Method of fighting. We see the Leaders advancing before their Troops and making an Excursion, and soon as they had obtained the Spoils of the vanquished, returning to them again. If this Passage is attended to, it will clear up many Things in *Ho-
mer*,

390 STATIUS's THEBAID. Book VIII.

Thus the young Lion in the *Caspian* Shade,
(No Length of Mane terrific yet display'd) 830

Yet innocent of slaughter'd Bull or Ram,
If chance he lights upon a straggling Lamb
Without the Fold, in Absence of the Swain,
Riots in Blood, and glories in the slain.

On *Tydeus* then unknown he casts his Eyes, 835
And measuring his Valour by his Size,

Proudly presumes to make an easy Prey
Of the slain Chief, and bear his Arms away.

He now had levell'd many a distant Blow,

Ere the brave Prince perceiv'd his puny Foe : 840
At length contemptuously he view'd the Man,
And formidably smiling thus began.

I see, vain Fop, too prodigal of Breath,
Thou seekest Honour from a glorious Death.

He paus'd : nor deigning to discharge a Blow 845

With Sword or Spear on such a worthless Foe,

His Arm scarce rais'd, a slender Javelin threw,

With fatal Certainty the Weapon flew ;

And, as if driven with his utmost Force,

Deep in his Groin infix'd, there stopt its Course. 850

mer, and his Imitators, which would otherwise seem very absurd.

Atys would have made a good Hero in a Romance. He was one of those Gentlemen who go to War only to please the Ladies, and mix the Beau with the Hero, two Characters the most inconsistent in Nature, though often united in Practice. Whilst however we are pitying the rash and ill-timed Gallantry of this young Man, we cannot but applaud the rough Soldier-like Behaviour of *Tydeus*, and the blunt Wit he shews on this Occasion. I shall only observe farther, that this Character is admirably well supported, and is a sufficient Proof of our Author's Vein for Satire.—The former Part of this Note belongs to *Barbius*.

The

The Chief of Life thus seemingly bereft,
The gen'r'ous Victor passes on, and left
His Arms untouched, and thus jocosely said.
These suit not *Mars*, nor thee, O fav'ring Maid :
What Man of Courage would not blush to wear 855
Such gaudy Trifles ?—nay, I scarce would dare
Present them, by my Consort to be borne,
Lest she reject them with indignant Scorn.
Thus spake *Oenides*, fir'd with Lust of Fame,
And sallies forth in quest of nobler Game. 860
Thus, when the Lion roams, where Heifers feed,
And lowing Beeves expatiate o'er the Mead,
The royal Savage traversing the Plain
In sullen Majesty, and four Disdain,
Spares the weak Herd, and culling out their Head,
Some lordly Bull, arrests and lays him dead. 866
Menæceus, list'ning to the dying Cries
Of *Atys*, swiftly to his Rescue flies ;
And left his Steeds should flag, deserts his Car,
And bounds impetuous thro' the Ranks of War. 870

v. 861. *Thus when the Lion*] In Order to obviate any Objection that may arise to the frequent Repetition of Similies drawn from the same Object, I shall transcribe Mr. *Pope's* Defence of *Homer* on that Point.—‘ Is it not more reasonable to compare the same Man always to the same Animal, than to see him sometimes a Sun, sometimes a Tree, and sometimes a River ? though *Homer* speaks of the same Creature, he so diversifies the Circumstances and Accidents of the Comparisons, that they always appear quite different. And to say Truth, it is not so much the Animal or the Thing, as the Action or Posture of them that employs our Imagination : two different Animals in the same Action are more like each other than one and the same Animal is to himself in two different Actions. And those who in reading *Homer* are shocked that 'tis always a Lion, may as well be angry that it is always a Man.’ See *Essay on Homer's Battles*.

Th' *Arcadian* Youths advanc'd to strip the Slain ;
 Nor did the *Thebans* labour to restrain,
 Till brave *Menæceus* thus :—O foul Disgrace
 To boasted *Cadmus* ! O degen'rate Race !
 Shall foreign *Atys* gain deserv'd Applause 875
 By nobly bleeding in another's Cause,
 While we decline the Danger of the Day,
 And Children, Wives, and all that's dear betray ?
 Each tender Care reviv'd, the Troops arise,
 Shame in their Breasts, and Anger in their Eyes. 880
 Mean while the *Theban* Princesses, a Pair
 Alike in Manners, and supremely fair,
 Retiring to their Chambers, give a Vent
 To mutual Grief, and mutual Discontent :
 Nor do they weep the present Ills of Fate, 885
 But from the earliest *Æra* of their State
 Seek Matter of Complaint : one mourns her Sire,
 And one the Mother Queen's incestuous Fire ;
 This weeps her absent Brother's baneful Stars,
 The Monarch that, but both detest the Wars. 890
 Their Vows suspended by an equal Love,
 They fondly pity whom they can't approve,

v. 873. *O foul Disgrace*] This little Exhortation of *Menæceus* to his Soldiers is at once concise and pithy. A longer Speech at this Juncture would have been very absurd. He has laid all that was wanted, and nothing but what he ought. It is something like that comprehensive Harangue of the great *Gustavus*. ‘Look ye at those Fellows ; either fell them, or they'll fell you.’—It is remarked of *Homer*, that his longest Orations are such as were delivered in the Heat of Battle, a Fault which none can accuse our Author of without manifest Injustice.

v. 891. *Their Vows suspended*] This recalls to my Remembrance four beautiful Lines from *Seneca* the Tragedian, who, in his *Thebæis*, introduces *Jocasta* speaking as follows.

Utramque quamvis diligam affectu pari,

Quæ

And doubt, whom they had rather have prevail :
At length the favour'd Exile sinks the Scale.

Thus *Pandionian Birds*, when they regain 895

Their native Clime in Winter's dreary Reign,
Perch'd on their Nests, in plaintive Accents tell,
And hear what various Accidents befell
Each other absent, and by Turns rejoice
In Notes, that emulate the human Voice. 900

Tears making Way, the chaste *Ismene* broke
Her Silence first, and thus, exclaiming, spoke.

O Sister ! what deluding Errors blind,
And mock the easy Faith of Human-kind !
When Images, in Dreams returning, play 905

Before our Eyes, distinct as in the Day ;
And Sleep is mark'd by Care : for Yester-night
My Fancy labour'd with the sudden Sight
Of Nuptials, which in Peace were never sought,
Nor enter'd in my most unguarded Thought. 910

The Bridegroom too among the rest was shown,
Scarce known in Person : once indeed I own

Quo causa melior forsque deterior tradit,
Inclinat animus, semper infirmo favens
Miseros magis fortuna conciliat suis.

Though by the bye the Poet seems to contradict what he said before, *viz.* that *Antigone* preferred *Polynices* in her Esteem.

v. 895. *Thus Pandionian Birds, when]* *Statius* is not the first Poet who has likened the Chattering of Women to the Chirping of Birds. *Virgil* in his *Aeneid* compares the loquacious *Juturna* to one of them.

Nigra velut magnas Domini cum divitis ædes
Pervolat, & pennis alta atria lustrat hirundo,
Pabula parva legens, nidisque loquacibus escas :
Et nunc porticibus vacuis, nunc humida circum
Stagna sonat.

Lib. 12. Verse 473.

394 STADIUS'S THEBAID. Book VIII.

I saw him, when my Marriage was propos'd,
 At Court.—But soon the glitt'ring Scene was clos'd.
 The Fires extinguish'd suddenly I view'd, 915
 And Omens and Prognostics dire ensu'd.
 My Mother follow'd then, with Fury fir'd,
 And *Atys* at my Hands with Shouts requir'd.
 What mean these dark Portents of Death obscure?
 I fear not, while our House is thus secure, 920
 While the Foe stands aloof, and Hope remains,
 Fraternal Concord may reward our Pains.
 While thus each other's Sorrows they report,
 A sudden Tumult fills the spacious Court;
 And *Atys* enters (moving Scene of Woe) 925
 By Toil and Sweat recover'd from the Foe.
 Life's ebbing Stream ran trickling on the Ground,
 One feeble Hand reclin'd upon the Wound,
 And his loose Hairs his bloodless Face conceald,
 His languid Neck dependent on the Shield. 930
Jocasta first the killing Object ey'd,
 And trembling call'd his fair intended Bride.
 This he request's, that with his dying Voice,
 And last Farewell he may confirm his Choice.
 Her Name alone, a pleasing Sound, long hung 935
 On his pale Lips, and trembled on his Tongue.

v. 923. *While thus*] This Description of the Distress of the two Lovers is beyond all the Encomiums that can be given it; though the Grief of *Ismene* on this Occasion is not so outrageous, as if she had not been prepared for it by a previous Dream. The dying Warrior is very artfully introduced, his Condition and Appearances are very picturesque, and the Effects of his violent Passion finely imagined, though at the same Time very natural.

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Book VIII. STADIUS's THE BAID. 395

The Servants shriek, the Virgin with her Hands
Conceals her Blushes: Modesty commands.

The Queen, indulgent to th' intreating Chief,
Constrains her to impart this last Relief. 940

Thrice at her Name he lifts her drooping Head,
And thrice sinks back, his vital Spirits fled.

On her, the Light of Heav'n no more enjoy'd,
He feasts his Eyes, admiring and uncloy'd.

No Parents near to rear the sacred Pyre, 945
Nor frantic Mother, or desponding Sire;
To her th' ungrateful Office they assign,
To tend his Obsequies and Rites divine.

There, no one present, o'er the Corse she sighs,
Closes each Wound, and seals her Lover's Eyes. 950

Mean while *Bellona* wak'd anew the Fray,
And turn'd the doubtful Fortune of the Day:
She chang'd her Torch, and other Serpents wore,
Heap'd slain on slain, and swell'd the Stream of Gore,
As if the Toil of Fight was scarce begun, 955
Much Work of Death remaining to be done.

But *Tydeus* shines the most; tho' sure to wound
Parthenopæus deals his Shafts around,

v. 957. *But Tydeus shines the most*] The Picture of *Tydeus* in the following Lines is very elaborately drawn. As his Fate is near at Hand, the Poet endeavours to make him quit the Stage with Honour, and immortalize him in his Verses. Accordingly this being the last Scene he is to appear in, he is ushered in with the greatest Pomp; and lest there should be any Doubt of his Superiority, after having been compared to the King of Beasts, he is represented by the Eagle, King of Birds. The Poet by this Accumulation of Similes raises our Ideas of his Hero much higher than any simple Description can reach.

The

Tho'

Tho' fierce *Hippomedon* impells his Horse
 Thro' the gor'd War, and crushes many a Corse, 960
 And *Capaneus*'s Javelin wings its Flight,
 Afar distinguish'd in the Ranks of Fight,
 His was the Day: before him trembling flies
 The *Theban* Herd, as thus aloud he cries.
 Why this Retreat, when unreveng'd remain 965
 Your valiant Comrades, late in Ambush slain?
 Behold the Man, by whom alone they bled:
 Behold, and wreak on his devoted Head
 Your Wrath collected.—Can ye thus forego
 The Chance of War, and spare the present Foe? 970
 Is there a Man, whom this wide-wasting Steel
 Has wrong'd, for Vengeance let him here appeal.
 Now by my Soul it grieves me, that content
 With fifty Deaths, my Course I backward bent
 To fair *Mycenæ*.—Fly then, but this Day 975
 The proud Usurper for your Flight shall pay.
 Scarce had he spoke, when on the left he spy'd
 The King, conspicuous for his plamy Pride,
 Rallying his routed Forces.—At the View
 The kindling Hero to th' Encounter flew, 980
 As on a Swan the royal Eagle springs
 With swift Descent, and shades him with his Wings.

v. 981. *As on a Swan*] This Comparison is very minutely copied from *Homer*, as may be seen from the Circumstance of the Shadowing of the Eagle's Wings.

So the strong Eagle from his airy Height,
 Who marks the Swan's or Crane's embodied Flight,
 Stoops down impetuous, as they light for Food,
 And stooping, darkens with his Wings the Flood.

Pope's Iliad.

Then

Then thus.—O Monarch, studious of the Right,
Meet we thus fairly by *Apollo's* Light ?

Or hadst thou rather trust thy worthleſs Life 985
To Night and Ambuscades, than open Strife ?
To this the sullen Tyrant nought replies,
But at the Foe a Spear loud-whizzing flies,
Charg'd with an Answer. Rapid was its Force ;
But tow'rds the Period of its furious Course 990
Oenides beat it off, and whirls his own
With Strength and Vigour until then unknown.
Swift rush'd the Lance, and promis'd in its Flight
To put an End to the destructive Fight.
The fav'ring Gods of either Party bent 995
Their Eyes towards it, anxious for th' Event ;
But for his Brother the fell Fiend preserv'd
Eteocles. Aside the Jav'lin fwerv'd
To *Pblegyas*, his Squire, where midſt the Pres
He toil'd with equal Honour and Succes. 1000
Now fiercer grown, th' *Ætolian* draws his Sword,
And rushes, but the *Theban* Arms afford
A grateful Shelter to the Coward-King.
As when the Shepherds, gath'ring in a Ring,
Attempt to drive the nightly Wolf away ; 1005
The prowling Savage, heedful of his Prey,
Pursues that only, nor attacks his Foes,
Whose Clubs and Stones annoy him as he goes.
Thus *Tydeus* disregards th' inferior Crowd,
And Vengeance on their guilty Monarch vow'd. 1010
Yet, scorning Opposition in the Chace,
He struck the daring *Thoas* in his Face ;
A well-aim'd Dart *Deilochus* arrests,
And left its Point deep-buried in his Breasts :

And

Pierc'd in the Side, then *Clonius* bit the Ground, 1015
 And stern *Hippotades*, from whose wide Wound
 The Bowels gush'd.—Full Helmets oft he skims
 In Air, and to the Trunk restores his Limbs,
 And now the Prince, unweary'd yet with Toils,
 Block'd himself up with Carcasses and Spoils : 1020
 With him alone the circling Hosts engage,
 The single Object of their missile Rage.
 Part glitter on the Surface of his Skin,
 Part frustrate fall ; and Part are lodg'd within :
 Some *Pallas* plucks away. His Targe appears 1025
 An Iron-Grove, thick set with gleamy Spears.
 No Crest is extant ; thro' the bristling Hide
 His naked Back and Shoulders are descry'd :
 And *Mars*, which on his Casque depictur'd fate,
 Fell off, a joyleis Omen of his Fate. 1030
 The shiver'd Brass into his Body pent,
 Wrought him such Pain as might have made relent
 The bravest Heart, when lo ! a Stroke descends,
 And from the Gums his gnashing Grinders rends.
 His Breast is delug'd with a Tide of Gore, 1035
 With Dust embrown'd, while each dilated Pore

v. 1019. *And now the Prince]* The magnanimous *Scæva* is in much the same Plight in the sixth Book of *Lucan's Pharsalia*.

Illum tota premit moles, illum omnia tela.
 ——Fortis crebris sonat istibus umbo,
 Et galeæ fragmenta cavæ compressa perurunt
 Tempora : nec quicquam nudis vitalibus obstat
 Jam pater stantes in summis offibus hastas.
 ——stat non fragilis pro Cæsare murus,
 Pompeiumque tenet : jam pectora non tegit armis:
 Ac veritus credi clypeo, lævaque vacasse,
 Aut culpa vixisse sua non vulnera belli
 Solus obit, densamque ferens in pectore sylvam,
 Tum gradibus fessis, in quem cadet, eligit hostem.

In

In copious Drops perspires.—Pleas'd he survey'd
 His Bands applauding, and the martial Maid,
 Who o'er her Eyes the spreading Ægis threw,
 As to her Sire in his Behalf she flew. 1040

But see, an ashen Jav'lin cuts the Wind,
 And leaves, with Anger charg'd, the Clouds behind.
 Long was the Author of the Deed unknown,
 Great *Menalippus*, for he durst not own :

At length the Foe's untimely Joy display'd 1045

The Warrior, herding in his Troop, betray'd.

For the pierc'd Hero, now no longer steel'd

Against the growing Anguish, loos'd his Shield,

And bent beneath the Wound. This seen, the *Greeks*
 Rush to his Aid with Groans, nor manly Shrieks : 1050

The Sons of *Cadmus*, smiling at their Grief,

With Shouts triumphant intercept Relief.

The Chief, inspecting close the adverse Side,

The Marksman, lurking in the Crowd, espy'd,

Collects his whole Remains of Life and Strength, 1055

And throws a Weapon of enormous Length,

Which neighb'ring *Hopleus* gave, nor gave in vain :

Forth spouts the Blood, extorted by the Strain.

By Force his sad Companions drag him thence,

(While yet unconscious of his Impotence, 1060

v. 1041. *But see, an Ashen Javelin]* These Verses are imitated
 from *Virgil*.

Has inter voces, media inter talia verba,
 Ecce viro stridens alis allapsa sagitta est :
 Incertum quâ pulsa manu, quo turbine adacta ;
 Quis tantam Rutulis laudem, casusne, Deusne,
 Attule rit : pressa est insignis gloria facti,
 Nec sese Æneæ jactavit vulnere quisquam.

Aeneid, Lib. 12. Ver. 323.

He

Then bear him to the Margin of the Field,
 His Sides supported in a double Shield ;
 And promise, he shall quickly reingage, 1065
 When Strength shall second his undaunted Rage.
 But he himself perceives his failing Breath,
 And shudd'ring at the chilling Hand of Death,
 Reclines on Earth, and cries—I die in Peace ;
 But pity me, O Sons of fertile *Greece* ! 1070
 I ask you not these Relics to convey
 To *Argos*, or the Seat of regal Sway,
 Regardless of my Body's future Doom,
 Nor anxious for the Honours of the Tomb.
 Curst are the brittle Limbs, which thus desert 1075
 The Soul, when most their Strength they should exert.
 All I solicit farther, is the Head
 Of *Menalippus* ; for my Jav'lin sped,
 And stretch'd, I trust, the Dastard on the Plains :
 Then haste, *Hippomedon*, if ought remains 1080

v. 1964. *His Sides*] The Ancients were wont to carry their Generals who fell in Battle on a Shield ; as we learn from *Virgil*, Book 10.

— At socii multo gemitu, lacrymisque,
 Impositum scuto referunt Pallanta frequentes.

Again, Book 10.

At Lausum socii exanimum super arma ferebant.

The losing a Shield in Combat was looked upon as the greatest Disgrace that could befall a Man :

Tecum Philippos & celerem fugam
 Senfi, relictâ non bene parmulâ,

says *Horace* : hence the famous Saying of the *Spartan Lady*, when she gave her Son a Shield ; ‘ Aut cum illo, aut in illo ;’ i. e. ‘ Either return with it, or upon it.’ — Part of this Note belongs to *Bernartius*.

Of

Of Argive Blood ; and thou, *Arcadian Youth*,
 In Praise of whom Fame e'en detracts from Truth :
 Go, valiant *Capaneus*, thy Country's Boast,
 And now the greatest of th' *Argolic Host*.
 All mov'd : but *Capaneus* arrives the first, 1085
 Where breathing yet he lay, deform'd with Dust,
 And took him on his Shoulders. Down his Back
 Flows the warm Blood, and leaves a Crimson Track.
 Such look'd *Alcides*, when in Times of Yore
 He enter'd *Argos* with the captive Boar. 1090
 O'ercome with Joy and Anger, *Tydeus* tries
 To raise himself, and meets with eager Eyes
 The deathful Object, pleas'd as he survey'd
 His own Condition in his Foe's pourtray'd.
 The sever'd Head impatient he demands, 1095
 And grasps with Fervour in his trembling Hands,

v. 1095. *The sever'd Head*] We are now come to that remarkable Action of *Tydeus* which so much offended Mr. *Pope*, that, in vindicating a Passage of *Homer*, where *Achilles* wishes, he could eat the Flesh of *Hector*, he says, ' However, this is much more tolerable ' than a Passage in the *Thebaid* of *Statius*, where *Tydeus* in the very ' Pangs of Death, is represented as gnawing the Head of his E- ' nemy.' — But with Deference to the Memory of that great Man, I must beg Leave to offer something in my Author's De- fence, which I shall leave the Reader to consider.

First, with Respect to the Fact taken absolutely, and in itself, the Poet does not recite it as worthy of Imitation, or praise his Hero for the Perpetration of it ; but expresses his Abhorrence of it, and informs us, that *Tisiphone* suggested it to *Tydeus*, and that *Pallas* herself, his staunch Patroness, was so disgusted as utterly to desert him : these are Circumstances that sufficiently absolve the Poet from the Censure of making his favourite Character so monstrously brutal and inhuman.

Secondly, if we consider it comparatively, we must observe, that the Will and Intention, which only render moral Actions culpable were the same both in *Achilles* and *Tydeus*. The former wishes he could eat his Enemy's Flesh, the latter does it ; so that the only

While he remarks the restless Balls of Sight,
 That sought and shun'd alternately the Light.
 Contented now, his Wrath began to cease,
 And the fierce Warrior had expir'd in Peace ; 1100
 But the fell Fiend a Thought of Vengeance bred,
 Unworthy of himself, and of the dead.
 Mean while, her Sire unmov'd, *Tritonia* came,
 To crown her Hero with immortal Fame :
 But, when she saw his Jaws besprinkled o'er 1105
 With spatterd Brains, and ting'd with living Gore ;
 Whilst his imploring Friends attempt in vain
 To calm his Fury, and his Rage restrain :
 Again, recoiling from the loathsome View,
 The sculptur'd Target o'er her Face she threw ; 1110
 And, her Affection chang'd to sudden Hate,
 Resign'd *Oenides* to the Will of Fate :
 But, ere she join'd the Senate of the Skies,
 Purg'd in *Ilyssos* her unhallow'd Eyes.

Difference is, that *Tydeus* had a better Appetite, and less Aversion to human Flesh than *Achilles*.

Lastly, if it is really a Fault, the Commission of it was owing to the extravagant Veneration that *Statius* had for *Homer*, as it is evidently imitated from the abovementioned Passage in the *Iliad*: so that the original Thought will still be chargeable on that great Author.

v. 1114. *Ilyssos*] Is a River of *Elisium*, which the Poet terms guiltless, because it makes guiltless, i. e. purifies. It is opposed to *Styx*, a Stream of Hell; and called in Greek Ηλύσος, from Λύση, that is to say, Solution because Souls after the Solution of their corporeal Bonds descend to those Fields.

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

THE

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE NINTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Thebans, spirited up by Eteocles, to revenge the Insult offered to Menalippus's Body, renew the Fight with great Ardour. Polynices, almost overcome with Grief for the Death of Tydeus, laments very pathetically over him. Hippomedon opposes the Enemy's Onset with unparalleled Fortitude. Lycus wounds him. He is assisted by Alcon, and kills Mopsus, Polites, and many others of Note. The Fury Tisiphone draws him off from attacking the Thebans by a false Insinuation of Adraustus's being taken Prisoner. In the mean Time the Grecians are worsted, and the Body of Tydeus is wrested from them: Hippomedon returns to the Combat, pursues them into the River; and after a great Slaughter of them, is opposed by the God of the Stream himself, and being cast on Shore, is overpowered by their Numbers, and slain, notwithstanding Juno's Interposition with Jupiter in his Behalf. Parthenopæus then signalizes himself by his Feats of Archery, and is presented by Diana with a Set of poisoned Arrows. She solicits Apollo in his Favour, but to no Purpose. He is near being slain by Amphion, but the Goddess and Dorceus rescue him. At length Dryas, at the Instigation of Mars, slays him, and is killed himself by an invisible Agent, supposed to be Diana herself. The young Arcadian just at the Point of Death gives his last Commands to Dorceus, with which the Book concludes.

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BOOK THE NINTH.

THE brutal Rage of bloody *Tydeus* fires
 His Foes, and th' Ardour of Revenge inspires.
 E'en his own *Grecians* less deplore his Fate,
 And blame his Fury and Excess of Hate.
Mars too, severest on th' embattel'd Mead,
 Fame represents disgusted at the Deed, 5
 What time, a vig'rous Agent in the War,
 O'er Hills of slain he drove his rattling Car.
 So dire a Scene the God could not survey,
 But turn'd his Steeds, and measur'd back the Way. 10
 To punish then the Injury sustain'd
 By *Menalippus*, on his Corse prophan'd
 The *Theban* Youth with Wrath rekindled rise.
 From Man to Man th' infectious Vengeance flies,

v. 1. *The brutal Rage*] The Poet, foreseeing as it were, that he should offend the Delicacy of the Critics by this Narrative, seems in this Passage to have endeavoured to obviate the Censure, and assure the Reader, that he did not propose this Action of his Hero as worthy of Imitation, but quite the Reverse:—with a View to this, he represents *Mars* expressing his Abhorrence of it in the strongest Manner, and introduces *Eteocles* taking Advantage of this Act of Brutality, to rally the *Thebans* to the Charge.

As if some Foe their Sires should disintomb, 15
 And their Remains a Prey to Monsters doom.
 The Monarch fans the Fire, and thus bespeaks:
 Who now will favour, and account the Greeks
 As Men?—Behold! with Arms supply'd no more
 They ply their Teeth, and lap the *Theban* Gore. 20
 Say, do we not with *Lybian* Lions fight,
 With human Art opposing savage Might.
 See *Tydeus*, as a Lenitive in Death,
 Feeding on hostile Flesh resigns his Breath.
 With Fire and Sword contented we engage; 25
 Their Want of Weapons is supplied by Rage.
 Refining Cruelty, full in the View
 Of *Jove*, this impious Track may they pursue.
 Yet truly they the Prophet's End bemoan,
 And curse the Land for Mischiefs not its own. 30
 In Words like these the King harangu'd aloud,
 And vainly stalk'd before th' obsequious Crowd.
 In all an equal Fury burns, to gain
 The Spoils and hated Corse of *Tydeus* slain.
 Thus Fowls obscene hang o'er the liquid Way, 35
 When from afar the wafting Gales convey

v. 35. *Thus Fowls obscene*] Milton has a noble Simile conceived in the genuine Spirit of this Author:

As when a Flock
 Of rav'ous Fowl, though many a League remote,
 Against the Day of Battle, to a Field
 Where Armies lie incamp'd, come flying, lur'd
 With Scent of living Carcasses, design'd
 For Death the following Day, in bloody Fight.

Par. Loft, Book 10. v. 273.

With

v. 6
Tydeus

The Scent of Bodies that unburied lie,
 And taint the thick'ning Æther.—As they fly,
 With flapping Pinions all the Skies resound :
 The lesser Birds retire, and quit their Ground. 40
 Fame flies from Man to Man, from Band to Band,
 And spreads vague Murmurs o'er the *Theban* Land ;
 More swift than wont she plies her sable Wings,
 When woeful Tidings to some Wretch she brings.
 To trembling *Polynices* now she bears 45
 The dismal News, and thunders in his Ears.
 His Tears congeal'd, all petrified with Grief,
 He stands, and for a Time witholds Belief.
 For his superior Valour, so well known,
 Forbids him to believe the Chief o'erthrown: 50
 But when a fresh Report pronounc'd him dead,
 A Cloud of Grief his Eyes and Mind o'erspread ;
 All Circulation ceasing in his Veins.
 He faints, he falls : his Arms bestrew the Plains.
 His Tears now gush forth at the last Effort, 55
 And the bright Greaves his falling Shield support.
 Lonely he walks amidst a circling Throng,
 And scarcely drags his fault'ring Knees along,
 And cumbrous Spear, as though he was deprest
 With countless Wounds, and pain'd above the rest. 60
 The breathless Hero by his Comrades shewn,
 Who the sad Prince attend with many a Groan,
 He grovels o'er the Corse, (while from his Eyes
 The Tears run copious) and desponding cries,
 O *Tydeus*, Hope of all my warlike Toils, 65
 Prop of my Cause, and Partner of my Spoils !

v. 65. O *Tydeus*] These Reflections of *Polynices* on the Death of *Tydeus* are very manly and pathetic : They display a Dignity of Soul

Is this the Recompence I should bestow,
 Are these the Thanks which to my Friend I owe,
 That in my Sight I suffer thee to lie
 Unwept and bare beneath a foreign Sky ? 70
 In Exile now far worse than Death I rove,
 Depriv'd in thee of more than Brother's Love.
 Nor seek I now the Crown by Lot decreed,
 And sullied Throne to which I should succeed :
 Little I prize the Badges of Command, 75
 And Scepter, which I take not from thy Hand.
 Stand off, ye Warriors, and to me alone
 Resign the Fight :—The Fortune is my own.
 No longer now your useless Arms employ
 Nor in Pursuit of Vengeance still destroy. 80
 What greater Proof of Malice can you give,
 Or how can I atone, while I survive,
 For my Friend's Death ?—O King, O conscious Night,
 Begun with Strife, but closing with Delight !
 O Argos, dearest to the Gods above, 85
 And short-liv'd Wrath, the Pledge of lasting Love !

Soul, a Disinterestedness of Friendship, and an Overflowing of Gratitude, that is rarely to be found in the Breast of the Ambitious : And I doubt not, but Readers of the same delicate Mould as the Speaker here seems to be, will meet with a great deal of Entertainment in the Perusal of this masterly Oration.

v. 77. *Stand off, ye Warriors,*] This Action, which proves the great Courage of Polynices, has been censured in *Achilles*, as a Mark of the utmost Rashness and Fool-hardiness ; yet it is remarkable, that *Virgil* and *Milton*, as well as our Author, have imitated it from *Homer*.

At pius Æneas dextram tendebat inermem
 Nudato capite, atque suos clamore vocabat.
 Quo ruitis ? quæve ista repens Discordia surgit !
 O cohibete iras : iustum jam foedus, et omnes
 Compositæ leges, mihi jus concurrere soli ;
 Me sfinite atque auferte metus. —

Aeneid, L. 12.

Oh

Oh ! hadst thou (while my Life was in thy Hand,
Stretch'd me unpitied on a foreign Strand !
Yet more—Great Chief, thou didst adopt my Cause,
And, trusting *Jove* and hospitable Laws, 90
Repair to *Thebes*, whence none would have return'd
Less brave.—So strong the Flame of Friendship burn'd.
Fame hath e'en now of *Theseus* ceas'd to boast,
And *Telamon*'s Renown in thine is lost.
How chang'd thy Form ! ah ! what a diff'rent Air !
But say, what Wounds shall first employ my Care ? 96
How shall I know the *Theban* Blood from thine ?
And in thy Death what Numbers did combine ?
Full well I ween, this envious *Jove* decreed ;
And *Mars* with all his Javelin help'd the Deed. 100
He spake, and washes with his Tears away
The Clots of Blood that on the Visage lay ;
And ev'ry Limb compos'd, thus cries anew :
Could'st thou thus far my just Revenge pursue,
And I still breathe ?—This said, with Woe distress'd,
He points the naked Sceptre to his Breast. 106
His pitying Friends restrain'd his daring Hands,
While the good King his Rashness reprimands,
And sooths his Rage, revolving in his Mind
The Turns of War, and what the Fates design'd ; 110
Then from the much-lov'd Corse, from which arose
His Love of Death, and Bitterness of Woes,
He steals the Youth, and, whilst his Words afford
A sweet Delusion, sheathes unseen the Sword.
Such o'er th' unfinish'd Field (his Comrade dead) 115
The Bull, inactive with Despair, is led :

v. 115. *Such o'er th' unfinis'd*] The Hint of this beautiful Simile
was taken from one in the 13th Book of *Homer's Iliad*.

Part of the Yoke on his bent Neck he wears,
 And Part the Swain, the Tears fast-streaming bears.
 But see! the Flow'r of all the *Theban Band*,
 Fir'd with their Chief's Example and Command, 120
 Appears, whose Prowess *Mars* might not despise,
 Nor *Pallas* view their Skill but with Surprize.
 Unmov'd *Hippomedon* the Shock withstands,
 A Shield and Spear pretended in his Hands;
 As some high Cliff, whose bleak and rugged Brow 125
 O'erhangs the Deeps, nor fears the Surge below,
 Nor storms above, but stands by both unmov'd,
 Their Threats defy'd, their utmost Fury prov'd.

Ἄλλ' ὁς τὸν νεῖλὸν βόες οἴνοπε τηντὸν ἄροτρον
 Ἰσον θυμὸν ἔχοντες τιτάνετον, ἀμεφὶ δ' ἄρα σφίν
 Πρυμηοῖσιν κτείνοντες πολὺς ἀνακηκίεις ιδρας,
 Τὰ μὲν τε ζυγὸν οἷον ἐνέζοντες ἀμφες ἔργα
 Ιεμένων κατὰ ὄλκα, τίμενει δέ τε τέλσον ἀράγειν. V. 706.

v. 121. *Whose Prowess Mars might not despise*] This Distinction of Skill and Prowess cannot appear superfluous to any one who considers, that Valour tempered with Prudence was the characteristical Property of *Pallas*, and that meer brutal Courage only was attributed to *Mars*.

v. 125. *As some high Cliff*] *Virgil* and *Tasso* have two Comparisons upon this Subject.

Ille, velut pelagi rupes immota, resistit :
 Ut pelagi rupes, magno veniente fragore,
 Quæ se se multis circum latrantibus undis,
 Mole tenet : scopuli nequicquam et spumea circum
 Saxa fremunt, laterique illisa refunditur alga.

Æn. 7. v. 586.

Ma come alle procelle esposto monte,
 Che percosso dai flutti al mar sovraste,
 Sostien firme in se stesso i tuoni, e l' onte
 Del ciel irato, e i venti, e l' onde vaste :

The Repetition of *Pelagi rupes* adds greatly to the Merit of *Virgil's* ; *Tasso's* is too confin'd to admit of any heightening Circumstances, and our Author's is spoil'd by that unlucky Bathos at the Close.

E'en

E'en worsted *Neptune* shuns th' unequal War,
And shatter'd Ships decline it from afar. 130

Eteocles first ey'd the godlike Man,
And, ere he whirl'd his Javelin, thus began,
Say, are ye not ashame'd to war in Sight
Of Heav'n, for one whose Deeds disgrace the Fight.
Is it such Merit, such Renown to have 135

A savage Monster's Relicks for the Grave ?
Lest unlamented, uninterr'd he lie,
And his Corse rot beneath a foreign Sky ?
Dismiss your Cares : nor Beasts nor Birds of Prey
Will drink his Gore, and bear his Flesh away ; 140
Nay, should his Corse to *Vulcan*'s Rage be doom'd,
The pious Flames would leave it unconsum'd.
He ceas'd, and flung a Javelin, which the Brats
Forbade beyond the second Orb to pass.

Then *Pheres*, and the vig'rous *Lycus* threw. 145
Short of its Aim the Dart of *Pheres* flew ;
While that of vig'rous *Lycus* lightly graz'd
The nodding Helm with sculptur'd Forms imblaz'd.
Cleft by the Point, the Crests asunder fled,
And thro' the Casque appear'd his naked Head. 150
Astounded with the Stroke, he dares not fly,
Nor on his own Defence alone rely ;
But wheresoe'er he turns the Corse he views,
And standing or advancing ; still pursues
That for his Object, nor to aim a Blow, 155
Desists to watch the Motions of the Foe.
Not thus, with all a Mother's Fury stung,
The lowing Heifer guards her first-born Young.

v. 159. *Not thus with all a Mother's*] This Description of the Contest for the Body of *Tydeus* is imitated from that over the Body of

When the gaunt Wolf her straw-built Fortress storms ;
 A Circle, wheeling, with her Horns the forms, 160
 And dauntless foams, nor mindful of her Sex,
 With more than female Rage the War expects.

At length the Cloud of flying Javelins o'er,
 The Weapons to their Owners they restore.

First Sicyonian *Alcon* lent his Aid, 165
 And with him brought from *Pisan Ida's* Shade
 A Troop of Youths.—On these the Chief relies,
 And hurls a Beam against his Enemies.

Swift as a Shaft the Ruin wings its Way
 Across the Field, nor knowing of Delay, 170
 A Passage thro' the Shield of *Mopsus* broke,
 And fell'd *Polites* with a sudden Stroke.

At *Cydon* and *Pbalanthus* then he threw,
 And *Eryx*, wounded through his Helmet, slew,
 Whilst in the Search of Weapons back he turn'd, 175
 Nor fearing Death, with Hopes of Conquest burn'd :
 As quiv'ring in his Jaws the Lance he views,
 In Death's last Anguish the tough Wood he chews,
 While mix'd with Murmurs, gush'd the purple Spring,
 And on the Point his Teeth all loosen'd ring. 180
Leonteus, hid behind his social Band,
 Forth from the Rank advanc'd his trembling Hand,

of *Patroclus* in the 17th Book of the *Iliad*, though diversified with many additional Circumstances : and this elegant Comparison is paraphrased from one in the Beginning of the above-mentioned Book.

Οὐδὲ ἔλαχ' Ἀτρέω γὸν αρηίφιλον Μεγέλου
 Πάτροκλον. Τρέψατο δαμεις σὺ δησοτῆτι·
 Βῆ δὲ Δρόποις περιπάχων κεκορυθμένον αἴθοπι χαλκον·
 Ἀμφὶ δὲ ἀπὸ αὐτῶν βαῖν, ὡς τις περὶ πόρτας μίτηρ
 Πρωτοτόκον κινητὸν, καὶ περὶ εἰδῆς τόκον·
 Ως περὶ Πατρόκλων βαῖνε ξενθό Μεγέλων.

And

BOOK IX. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 413

And seizing by the Hair, in Quest of Prey,
Essay'd to draw the Warriors Corse away.

Hippomedon the Dastard's Aim descries, 185

And though from ev'ry Quarter Dangers rise,
Sheer from his Arm the guilty Hand divides
With his keen Blade, and thus insulting chides.

Be this thy Punishment, vile Wretch, and know,

'Tis *Tydeus*, *Tydeus* gives the wrathful Blow: 190

Henceforth the Relics of the dead revere,
And the Revenge of breathless Heroes fear
Thrice did the *Thebans* bear away the slain,
And thrice the *Grecian* Phalanx did regain.

As in a Storm on the *Sicilian* Main 195

An anxious Vessel wanders (whilst in vain
The Pilot struggles with the driving Wind)
And measures back the Space she left behind.

Nor then, repuls'd by countless Enemies,

Hippomedon had quitted his Emprise, 200

Tho' their loud-thund'ring Engines interpos'd,
The total Force of *Thebes* had with him clos'd,
And cover'd with join'd Shields their banded Pow'rs,
(A Mode of Fight the Bane of lofty Tow'rs)

But the fell Fury, mindful of her Lord, 205

And *Tydeus*' Rage detested and abhor'd,

v. 190. *Tis Tydeus, Tydeus gives the wrathful]*

— *Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas*
Immolat, & p̄nam scelerato ex sanguine sumit.

v. 193. *Thrice did the Thebans]* *Statius in this Passage had an Eye to the following Lines in the Iliad.*

Τεὶς μὲν μιν μετόπισθε ποδῶν λάσσε φαιδίμος Ἐκτῷ,
Ελκέμενας μεμαὼς, μέχα δὲ τρίσσατιν ὄμοικλα.
Τεὶς δὲ δύ' Αἴαντες θῆριν ἐπιειμένοι αἰλυν,
Νεκρὸς αἴπειν φέλεισαν. —

v. 205. *But the fell Fury]* This Piece of Machinery is very well conducted, and the Description of *Tisiphone* full of that sublime

Ima-

Invades by Stealth the Centre of the Field,
Transform'd her Person, and her Garb conceal'd.
Both Hosts perceiv'd her, and thro' Horse and Man
The dewy Sweat of sudden Horror ran : 210
Though her stern Face relax'd into a Smile,
Halys she shews, to carry on the Guile.
The Snakes desist to hiss at her Command ;
Nor Scourge, nor Torch obscene was in her Hand.
Array'd in Arms, and bland in Voice and Look, 215
Beside *Hippomedon* her Stand she took ;
Yet, while her artful Tale the Warrior heard,
He fear'd her Looks, and wonder'd why he fear'd.
To whom, dissolv'd in Tears, the Fury said :
Illustrious Hero, vain is all thine Aid 220
To guard the Bodies scatter'd on the Plain,
(But, are we anxious for th' unburied Slain ?)
Behold, incompas'd by a barb'rous Throng,
The great, the good *Adraustus* drag'd along !
In Preference to all the Grecian Band. 225
On thee he calls, and beckons with his Hand.
I saw him fall (a Scene scarce to be borne)
The Crown from off his hoary Temples torn.
Not far from hence he toils.—Direct thine Eyes,
Where thick in Air the Clouds of Dust arise. 230
Pond'ring at this a while the Warrior stands,
And weighs his Fears, the Fury reprimands.
Why dost thou hesitate ? say, do we go,
Or yield the Dead and Living to the Foe ?

Imagery, which constitutes the chief Beauty of heroic Poesy : the Gods, Goddesses, and other supernatural Deities very often are introduced in this Manner, and in particular there is one Instance of it in the 13th Book of the Iliad, where *Neptune* in the Form of *Calchas*, inspirits the two *Ajaxes* to continue the Battle ; from whence, I presume, this was taken.

He

He leaves the wretched Office to his Friends, 235
 And, to relieve the King, his Progress bends ;
 Yet oft reverts his Eyes toward the Slain,
 Prepar'd, whene'er recall'd, to turn again.
 He blindly follow'd, where the Fury led,
 And here and there his Course erroneous sped, 240
 Till, casting back her Shield, she wing'd her Flight,
 Burst by the Snakes, her Casque admits the Light.
 The Clouds dispersing, he beholds from far
Adrastus safe and fearless in his Car.
 The *Thebans* the contested Corse possess, 245
 And notify with Clamours their Success :
 The Shouts victorious dwell upon their Ears,
 And strike the *Grecians*' Souls with Grief and Fears.
 See *Tydeus*, (thus all-potent Fate decreed)
 Drag'd to and fro across the hostile Mead ! 250
Tydeus, whom not the mightiest Chief withstood ;
 But often as the *Thebans* he pursu'd,
 A Passage open to his Progress lay,
 Whether on Foot or Horse he took his Way.
 No Rest their Arms or wearied Hands obtain, 255
 Employ'd to wreak their Vengeance on the Slain.
 Securely now they pierce his clay-cold Face,
 And the great Dead with Wounds unfelt disgrace.
 Promiscuous here the brave and tim'rous stood,
 Deeming their Hands ennobled with his Blood, 260

v. 257. *Securely now*] The unfortunate *Hector* meets with the same ungenerous Treatment from the *Grecians* ; *Homer's Iliad*, Lib. 22. v. 369.

————— 'Αλλος δὲ περιδραμον ἔεις 'Αχαιῶν,
 Οἱ καὶ θηρόντε φυῆν, Εἴδετο μητὸν
 'Επερεθεῖσθαι οἱ τις αὐτοτε γε παρέστη.

And

And to their Wives and tender Infants show
 The Weapons, stain'd with Carnage of the Foe.
 Thus when, with Force combin'd, the *Lybian* Swains
 Have quash'd the stern Dispeopler of the Plains,
 Thro' Dread of whom each Night the Folds were barr'd,
 And the sad Shepherds form'd a watchful Guard. 266
 The Fields exult, with Shouts the Hinds arise ;
 They pluck his Mane, and gaze with wond'ring Eyes ;
 And, while his hideous Yawn and Bulk engage
 Their Notice, call to Mind his living Rage, 270
 Whether upon some Rustick's Wall he's view'd,
 Or decks an ancient Daughter of the Wood.
 But fierce *Hippomedon* returns again,
 And, though he clearly sees, he fights in vain
 For the rap'd Body lends his useless Aid, 275
 And brandishes aloft his fatal Blade.
 Scarce he selects his Comrades from his Foes,
 Whilſt, unrefiſted, through the War he goes.
 But now the Ground, with ſlipp'ry Slaughter dy'd,
 Arms, dying Warriors, Cars without a Guide, 280
 And his left Thigh, whose Wound he wou'd not own,
 Or which in Time of Conflict was unknown,
 Retard the Chace, and oft his trembling Knees
 Refuse their Aid.—*Hopleus* at length he sees,

v. 253. *Thus when, &c.*] This Comparison is a fine Illustration of what the Poet has heretofore said of this Hero ; and here it may not be *mal-a-propos* to remark, that our Author, with a truly becoming Spirit, deigns very rarely to tread in the Path of his Predeceſſors, and adopt in his Works the Alluſions of others. This the Reader muſt have obſerved, as I have always confron‐ted him with the Original, whenever he does it. Nor are his Imitations, like those of *Virgil* from *Homer*, a ſervile Copy : A Hint is ſufficient to him ; he only takes the Outlines of a Picture, and fills them up with masterly Traits of his own Fancy, which give it an Air of Originality, and do not leſs Honour to his Genius than Judgment.

The

The 'Squire and Comrade of th' *Ætolian* Chief: 285

Who, bath'd in Sorrow, and intranc'd with Grief,

On his great Master's gen'rous Courser fate.

The Steed unknowing this last Act of Fate,

Neighs and curvets (his graceful Neck depress'd)

And only grieves at th' Interval of Rest. 290

Imbolden'd now against th' inferior Band

Of Infantry, sad *Hopleus* takes in Hand,

The Reins, and strokes the Steed that will not own

Another Lord, and bear a Load unknown.

Then thus accosts him.—Why, unhappy Steed, 295

Dost thou desert me at my greatest Need,

And, mindless of Command, refuse to bear?

No longer regal Trappings shalt thou wear,

Nor pamper'd on *Ætolia*'s verdant Plain,

In the clear Current bathe thy flowing Mane. 300

For what remains, avenge thy Master's Shade,

At least pursue them: nor a Captive made,

Endure the Burden of a Foe abhor'd,

Nor after *Tydeus* take a foreign Lord.

The Horse, as sensible of his Discourse, 305

Springs forth resistless as the Lightning's Force.

v. 295. *Why unhappy Steed*] There is something extremely pathetic in this Address; and *Statius* is not singular in making his Heroes accost their Horses. *Hector* in the 8th Book of the *Iliad*, and *Achilles* in the 19th makes a formal Speech to these Animals. The Harangue of *Mezentius* to his Courser in the 10th Book of the *Aeneid* is in some Respects like this before us.

— Aut hodie victor spolia illa cruenta
 Et caput *Æneæ* referes, Lausique dolorum
 Ultor eris mecum; aut aperit si nulla viam vis,
 Occumbes pariter, neque enim, fortissime, credo
 Jussa aliena pati, et dominos dignabere Teucros. V. 862.

Transports him like a Torrent o'er the Plains,
Nor scorns his equal Guidance of the Reins.
The Centaur thus from *Offa*'s piny Brow
Descends impetuous to the Vales below, 310
Half Man, half Beast: where'er his Course he takes,
The Hill, the Dale, the Grove, the Forest shakes.
Collected in one Herd, the *Theban* Race
Retires, while headlong he pursues the Chace, 314
And mows them down, ere scarce they feel the Wound;
The headless Trunks fall backward on the Ground.
The vanquish'd Warriors now in Prospect reach
Their native Stream, and press to gain the Beach;
Above his wonted Swell *Ismenos* rose,
A certain Signal of impending Woes. 320
Here, from the Labours of the longsome Way
Respiring, they indulge a short Delay.

v. 309. *The Centaur*] This Comparison is imitated from *Virgil*,
Æneid 7.

Ceu duo nubigenæ cum vertice montis ab alto
Descendunt centauri, Omolen, Othryngue nivalem
Linquentes cursu rapido: dat euntibus ingens
Sylva locum, et magno cedunt virgulta fragore.

Those who think *Virgil* had not a strong and sublime Imagination (says the Editor of Pitt's Version) are desired to consider this Simile, all the Circumstances of it are painted with Homeric Spirit and Magnificence, particularly,

Dat euntibus ingens
Sylva locum, et magno cedunt virgulta fragore.

To have a just Idea of the Thing described, says *Burmannus*, we are to suppose these Centaurs half Horse and half Man, but resembling the Horse in the Fore-part, and so bearing down with their Breast all that stood in their Way. *Statius* Theb. 9. 220. imitates our Author in a Manner rather bold than just.—Thus far Mr. *Warton*, from whose Sentence in Matters of Taste there lies no Appeal: However, I wish he had specified in what our Author has not imitated this Comparison justly.

The

The Waves, astonish'd at th' uncouth Alarms,
 Roll back, and glitter with the Blaze of Arms,
 They plung'd with half the Bank into the Tide, 325
 While Clouds of Dust conceal'd the farther Side.

He too leaps fearless from the broken Steep,
 Accoutred as he was, and tempts the Deep,
 Tenacious of the Reins, while heap'd on high,
 The hostile Billows thick before him fly. 330

Beside a Poplar, that o'erhangs the Flood,
 On the green Turf his Darts conspicuous stood.
 Dispirited with Fear, and scarce alive,
 They cast away their Arms and basely dive,
 Their Helms unlac'd, beneath the whelming Surge,
 Nor while their Breath permits, again emerge: 336
 While some by swimming hope the Shore to gain,
 But, cumber'd by their Armour, hope in vain;
 The radiant Belts around their Middles thrown,
 And wetted Breastplates help to weigh them down. 340
 As when in Ocean the Sky-tinctur'd Race
 Of Fishes spy some Dolphin on the Chace,

v. 325. *They plung'd with half the Bank into*] This Battle in the River *Ismenos* is copied from that of *Homer* in the 21st *Iliad*; and I doubt not, but, after an attentive Comparison, the Reader will find it diversified with equally striking Circumstances, and adorned with all that Variety of Imagery, which has been so much admired in the Original.

v. 341. *As when in Ocean*] The Poet, judiciously varying the Subject of his Similes with the Element, compares *Hippomedon* pursuing the *Thebans* in the River *Ismenos*, to a Dolphin in Chace of the lesser Fry. The Reader may see the Materials, on which our Author worked, by perusing the following Lines of *Homer*; but what he has drawn up in a simple unadorn'd Manner, his Copier has enriched with all the Flowers of Language and Luxuriancy of Description.

Ως δ' ὑπὸ δελφῖνος μεγαλύτερος ἵχθυς ἄλλος
 Φεύγοντες, πιμπλᾶσι μυχὺς λιμένος εὐόρμυς
 Δειδίστες· μάλας γάρ τε κατεῳδεῖς οὐ κελασσονται.

D d 2

Il. B. 21.
 Whose

Whose spouting Gills, and Storm-exciting Tail
 Upturn the Sands, so much their Fears prevail
 That in huge Shoals they seek their watry Caves, 345
 Mix with the Weeds, or lurk beneath the Waves ;
 Nor from the Deeps emerge, till far away
 He swims, to make some well-mann'd Ship his Prey.
 Thus the fierce Hero drives the scatter'd Trains,
 And in Mid-Water moderates the Reins, 350
 And grasps his Arms : he still maintains his Seat,
 And buoys his Steed up, rowing with his Feet,
 Whose Hoof, accustom'd only to the Land,
 Slides to and fro, and seeks the firmer Sand.
Chromis slew *Ion*, *Antiphus* lays dead 355
Chromis, and *Antiphus* by *Hypseus* bled.
 Then o'er *Astyages* black Death impends,
 And *Linus*, who, the River pass'd, ascends
 The Bank ; but Fate forbidding him to land,
 He tumbles back beneath great *Hypseus*' Hand. 360
 With equal Rage the *Greek* and *Theban* burn,
 From that same Stream ne'er destin'd to return.
 At both the River casts a fearful View,
 While both to Crimson change its fable Hue.
 Now mangled Skulls and Members of the Slain, 365
 Light Helmets which the floating Crests sustain,
 Darts, Bows unbent, and Shields of ductile Gold
 Adown the bellowing Current glitt'ring roll'd.
 With wand'ring Arms the Surface is o'erspread,
 The Bottom with the Corfes of the Dead : 370
 There Warriors struggling in the Pangs of Death,
 The Stream oppos'd drives back their issuing Breath.
 Whilst, borne away by the resistless Flood,
 Young *Agrius* seiz'd a lowly Elm that stood

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 tiful.

On the green Bank (his slidd'ring Steps to stay) 375
 The stern *Menaceus* lopps his Arms away.
 Supine he tumbles: the shock'd Tree surveys
 His Hands, still clenching its expanded Sprays.
 The Spear of *Hypseus* hapless *Sages* found;
 The Hero sinks, deform'd with many a Wound, 380
 Whilst for his Body Blood alone returns.
 His Brother to regain, *Agenor* burns,
 Ill-fated Chief! and from the steepy Strand
 Leap'd headlong down, and grasp'd him in his Hand:
 But with the Stream imbib'd more heavy grown, 385
 The wounded *Sages* sinks *Agenor* down,
 Who from the Deeps might have emerg'd again,
 But Love detain'd him there, his Brother slain.
 Whilst rising *Chaletus* attempts a Wound,
 By circling Eddies in the Gulph profound 390
 He sinks absorb'd: The gath'ring Billows rise
 Above his Head, till all conceal'd he lies.
 No more his Hand is seen, his Sword beneath
 The Depths descends, divided from the Sheath.
 In various Shapes, and countleſs Forms appear 395
 Ruin and Death.—A *Mycalesian* Spear

v. 382. *His Brother to regain*] Of all the Instances of brotherly Love and Friendship, I think this is at once the most strong and delicate. It is one of that Kind of Incidents, which, whilst they take off from and lessen the Horrors of War, plunge us into the Depth of Distress, and call forth that exquisite Sensibility, which is an Ornament to our Nature, and the greatest Proof of a good and generous Heart. Neither will those think this Action merely poetical, who have read the Epitaph on the two *Lytteltons* in *Magdalen College Chapel, Oxon*; one of whom slipping into the Water, his Brother jump'd in, and was drowned with him. Neither *Homer*, *Virgil*, nor any other Author presents us with an Anecdote of their Warriors equally beautiful.

Agyrtes strikes: in vain he looks behind,
 The latent Owner of the Dart to find;
 But hurried onward by the rapid Flood,
 The flying Lance drank deeply of his Blood. 400
 The Courser next of *Caledonian* Strain
 (His Shoulders pierc'd) stung with the deathful Pain,
 Rears up and resting on his Feet behind,
 With Hoofs uplifted paws the yielding Wind.
 Firm'd as he was against the watry Force, 405
 The Hero pities his expiring Horse,
 And, whilst deep Groans burst from his heaving Heart,
 Resigns the Reins, and then extracts the Dart.
 Safer in Gait and Aim, the Chief renews
 On Foot the Conflict, and the Foe pursues. 410
 To *Nomius* first, his Conquest he extends,
 On *Mimas* and *Licetas* next descends
 His Blade: Then *Lichas* of *Thisbæan* Strain,
 And young *Thespiades*, a Twin, was slain.

v. 413. Of *Thisbæan* Strain] Though I have not translated the Epithets annexed to *Nomius*, *Mimas*, *Lycetus*, and other doughty Heroes, as they convey no particular Idea, yet I could not pass over that of *Thisbæan*, which belongs to *Lichas*, after the strenuous Endeavours of the learned Commentator Gronovius to settle it thus. I shall transcribe his Conjectures as well for the Entertainment of my Readers, as a Sanction to my adopting this particular Epithet in my Version.

" In most of the MSS. it is *Thæbeumque Lichan*. Some will have
 " it to be *Phæbeumque* or *Phæleumque*; but the Adjective *Thebæus*
 " for *Thebanus* is new and too much a Grecism. I have found at
 " Length in one Book, *Thisbæumque*, and that is the true Reading.
 " In this very Book one is killed by *Parthænopeus*, *quem candida*
 " *Thisbe* miserat. You have in the 2d Iliad, in the Catalogue of the
 " *Bæotians*, πολυτρηρωνας τε Θισβην. Ovid 2 Met. *Quæ nunc Thisbæas*
 " *agitat mutata columbas*.

v. 418. To thy sad Parents henceforth better known.] The Poet here, though somewhat obscurely, hints at the following Verses of Virgil and Lucan, who imitated him.

Daucia

To rash *Panemus* then he cries.—Yet live,
And thy sad Brother's helpless Fate survive:
To the dire Walls of *Thebes* depart alone,
To thy sad Parents henceforth better known.

'Tis well, ye Gods, that with her bloody Hand
Bellona chang'd the Combat from the Land

420

To this same River, since the timid Throng
Is by their own *Ismenos* drag'd along.

Nor *Tydeus*' Shade shall wail around your Fire,
Debarr'd of what his Country's Rites require,
But Earth resolve him to his pristine State;

425

While you shall prove a far more rig'rous Fate,
The Fishes' Prey.—Such Taunts he deals around,
And with harsh Words embitters ev'ry Wound.

Now at the Foe the floating Darts he throws,
Then with his Falchion aims wide slaught'ring Blows.

Theron, a Comrade of the sylvan Maid,

431

And rustic *Gyas* felt his thrilling Blade:

Erginus, skill'd in naval Arts, he slew,
Herses, who ne'er the Rites of Tonsure knew,

And *Cretbeus*, bold Advent'rer on the Main,
Who, in the Depth of Winter's dreary Reign,

Had often past *Eubaea*'s highest Cliff,
The dread *Caphareus*, in a slender Skiff.

Daucia Laride, Thymberque simillima proles,
Indiscreta suis gratisque parentibus error,
At nunc dura dedit vobis discrimina Pallas.

Aeneid 10.

Stant gemini fratres, fecundæ gloria matris,
Quos eadem variis genuerunt viscera fatis:
Discrevit niors fæva viros: unumque relicum
Agnorunt miseri, sublato errore, parentes.

Pharsalia Lib. 3.

What cannot Fate atchieve?—transfix'd his Breast,
On Waves he floats, a Terror to the rest. 440
While gay *Pharsalus* o'er the liquid Plain
Guides his high Car, to seek his social Train,
A Doric Javelin, hissing from afar,
Precipitates the Vaunter from his Car.
Th' incumb'ring Juncture of the Chariot-Beam 445
Iimmers'd the Steeds beneath the rapid Stream.
Ye learned Nine, who make such Themes your Care,
Indulge my Thirst of Knowledge, and declare,
What watry Toils the Grecian Prince engag'd,
And why in obvious Arms *Ismenos* rag'd? 450
'Tis your's to vindicate the Voice of Fame,
And trace it to the Source from whence it came.
Crenæus (as preceding Bards have sung)
From fair *Ismenis*, and a Satyr sprung,
With youthful Spirits flush'd, and vig'rous Blood, 455
Rejoic'd to war in his maternal Flood.
The Bank his Cradle, there he first drew Breath,
And there, the Bank his Grave, he found his Death.
Presuming, that the Furies here employ
Their Arts in vain, with more than wonted Joy 460
He passes now the flatt'ring River o'er,
And fords alternately from Shore to Shore.

v. 447. *Ye learned Nine!*] The Poet's stopping abruptly in his Relation, and breaking out in this solemn Address to the Muses, alarms the Reader, and greatly raises his Attention: but as I have spoken so open and so copiously of the Nature and Reason of these extraordinary Invocations, I shall take no farther Notice of them. See the Note on the 41st and 935th Verses of the 4th Book.

453. *Crenæus*] The Motive of *Ismenos*'s Rage against *Hippomedon* was the same as that of *Xanthus*'s against *Achilles*: the former slew *Crenæus*, and the latter *Asteropæus*, who were both Favourites of the two River-Gods above-mentioned.

If

If down, or crost the Stream he takes his Way,
 The Waves assist him ; nor his Progress stay,
 When obvious to the driving Tide he goes ; 465
 But back with him th' obsequious Current flows.
 Not with more Care the circling Deeps defend
 The Body of their *Antbedonian* Friend :
 Thus *Triton* labours to compose the Main,
 When to his Mother's kind Embrace again 470
Palæmon hastes, and as he moves along,
 Strikes the slow Dolphin with his sounding Thong.
 Array'd in golden Panoply, he fought,
 The *Theban* Story on his Target wrought.
 Here (while no Fears disturb her tender Breast) 475
 Fair to the View, the *Tyrian* Damsel press'd
 The Bull's white Back : no more her Fingers hold
 His beauteous Horns ; in curling Billows roll'd,
 The sportive Sea her Feet, exulting, laves,
 You'd think the Lover swims and cuts the Waves. 480
 The Water firms our Faith, nor does the Stream
 Of Colour diff'rent from main Ocean seem.
 Now at *Hippomedon* he boldly aims
 His Darts, and with exulting Voice exclaims.
 No Poisons of *Lernean* Rankness stain 485
 Our Riv'lets, nor *Herculean* Serpents drain.
 This violated Stream (as thou shalt prove)
 Is doubly sacred to the Pow'rs above.

v. 475. *Here (while no Fears)* I cannot help thinking with the Editor of Pitt's *Virgil*, that *Statius* has indulged his Fancy too much in describing Shields of this Sort ; and here by the Way, that Gentleman observes, that our Author's Genius seems to be particularly suited to such Kinds of Description.

Without

Without Reply the Chief against him goes,
Whilst in his Offspring's Aid the River rose, 490
And check'd his Hand, which yet discharg'd a Wound
The piercing Lance Life's warm Recesses found.
The daring Mischief terrify'd the Flood,
And Streams of Grief distill'd from either Wood ;
Each hollow Bank with deeper Murmurs rung, 495
While the last Sound, that linger'd on his Tongue,
Was Mother, Mother.—Here he ceas'd : the rest
The whelming Surge with hideous Roar supprest.
Ismenis, compas'd with her Nymphs around,
Springs from her Cavern with a furious Bound, 500
Her Hair dishevell'd, rends her Sea-green Vest,
And marrs with frequent Stripes her Face and Breast.
Soon as above the Waves she lifts her Eyes,
Her Son she calls with unavailing Cries :
One Token of his Death is seen alone, 505
The Shield too well by his sad Parent known.
Far off he lies, where bellowing down the Steep,
Ismenos disembogues into the Deep
His Streams.—Thus the deserted *Halcyon* groans,
And her wet Dome, and floating Nest bemoans, 510

v. 589. *Without Reply*] This Silence is more expressive of true Valour, and more consistent with the real Character of a Hero than the most bitter and satirical Retort could have been. A brave Man is always more ready to justify himself by Deeds than Words. Thus the great *Hector*, when accused of Cowardice by *Sarpedon*, does not stay to make any Answer, but rushes among his Enemies to give the Accuser ocular Demonstration of his Courage, and make him ashamed of his unjust Imputation.

v. 509. *Thus the deserted Halcyon groans]* Statius with a Propriety rarely to be found (as I have already remarked in the Simile of the Dolphin) frequently shifts the Subject of his Comparisons with the Element, and descends to the very *Minutiæ* of Similitude. A Poet of less Taste and Fancy would have been content to have illustrated

BOOK IX. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 427

When the relentless South, and envious Flood
Have borne away to Sea her feather'd Brood.
Again the childless Matron dives, and hides
Her well-turn'd Limbs beneath the circling Tides ;
Thro' many a liquid Path she takes her Way, 515
Which far beneath the glassy Surface lay.
In vain the wretched Warrior's Corse she seeks,
And in loud Plaints her Agony bespeaks :
The dreadful River oft obstructs her View,
Its Colour darken'd to a sanguine Hue. 520
Headlong on missive Weapons now she lights,
And Faulchions, blunted in repeated Fights,
Then handles Helms, disguis'd with Clefts and Gore,
And turns the mangled Bodies o'er and o'er.
Nor from the briny Deep did she retire 525
To bitter *Doris*, till the pitying Choir
Of *Nereids* saw him floating on the Main,
And shov'd him to her longing Arms again.
She clasps as still alive, and with her Hand
Extends his Body on the grassy Strand ; 530
With her soft Hair his humid Visage dries,
And adds these Words, a Sequel to her Cries.
Say, did *Ismenos* of immortal Line,
And thy great Parents this sad Lot assign ?
Thus dost thou exercise supreme Command, 535
And rule our River ? — In a foreign Land

the Sorrow of *Ismenis* by that of a Swallow, a Nightingale, or any other Bird for the Loss of her young ; but our Author very judiciously takes in the Circumstance of her being a Water-Nymph, and compares her to the *Halcyon*, which always builds her Nest on the Banks of the Sea, or large Rivers.

More

More safe thou'dst been, more safe on hostile Shores,
 And the salt Wave of *Neptune*; that restores
 Thy Body, all deform'd in cruel Fight,
 And with thy Presence glads and shocks my Sight. 540
 Are these thy Father's Eyes, is this my Face,
 And did such Locks thy Grandsire's Shoulders grace?
 Art thou that Youth, who late conspicuous stood,
 Pride of the Stream, and Glory of the Wood?
 No more attended by my Nymphs, I move 545
 Queen of the Flood, and Goddess of the Grove,
 Where are those frequent Suitors, that of late
 Were seen to press around thy Mother's Gate;
 And Nymphs contending who should serve thee most?
 Why should I now inter thee on the Coast, 550
 And not in my Embrace?—O had I dy'd
 O'erwhelm'd amidst the Roarings of the Tide!
 Does not such Slaughter, O thrice rigid Sire!
 With Pity and with Shame thy Breast inspire?
 What Lake, in this thy Daughter's dire Distress, 555
 Conceals thee thus, whose deep and dark Recess

v. 544. *Pride of the Stream*] *Creneus* was Prince of the Stream by Right of his Grandfather *Ismenos*, and of the Grove by Virtue of being the Son of the Faun or Satyr.

545. *No more attended*] There is a wide Difference between the Lamentations of *Ismenis* and other Mothers for the Loss of their Children. She chiefly laments, that all her Honours must cease with his Death. The Prospect of this supersedes all other Considerations, and seems to affect her in a more particular Manner. In short, she mourns in as womanish a Manner as *Eve*, when *Michael* denounces her Departure from *Eden*.

Must I thus leave thee Paradise? thus leave
 Thee, native Soil, those happy Walks and Shades,
 Fit Haunt of Gods? where I had Hope to spend,
 Quiet, though sad, &c. *Par. Lost.* B. II. V. 269.

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Nor thy now breathles Grandson's early Fate,
 Nor our Complaints and Groans can penetrate ?
 See still *Hippomedon* thy Godhead braves,
 And rages, uncontroul'd, amidst thy Waves ! 560
 Unwonted Tremours seize the Banks and Flood,
 And the ting'd Billows drink *Aonian* Blood.
 Tho' slow in our Defence, thy ready Aid
 Attends the *Greeks*.—Yet see due Honours paid
 To my Son's last Remains ; and be it known, 565
 That soon another's Death thou shalt bemoan.
 These Words, accompany'd with Tears, she spoke,
 And stains her gen'rous Breast with many a Stroke.
 The Sea-green Sisters make her Loss their own,
 Sigh back her Sighs, and echo Groan with Groan. 570
Ismenos then lay buried in a Cave,
 Whence thirsty Clouds and Gales imbibe the Wave,

v. 566. *Soon another's Death thou shalt bemoan*] *Barbius* treats our Author's Want of Thought in this Place with great Humour. *Ismenis* (says he) reproaches her Father as quite ignorant of the Death of his Son and others. But when his Grandson's Fate approached, he opposes his Waves to *Hippomedon*.

— In his Offspring's Aid the River rose,
 And check'd his Hand.—

Did *Ismenis* do this in a Dream, or did our truly good Author nod over this Passage? — The latter I take to have been the Case.

v. 570. *Sigh back her Sighs*] After this Verse follows a Simile which is so very obscure, and consists of such filthy Images, that I have ventured to omit it by my Friends' Advice.

v. 571. *Ismenos then*] From this Line to the Speech of *Ismenos* to *Jupiter* there runs one continued Chain of Sublimity and Imagery scarce inferior to any Thing I have ever read.— The Picture of the Abode and Habit of this Water-God is superior to *Virgil's* Description of the *Tiber*; and that of the River's Resistance to *Hippomedon* is equal at least in Point of Circumstances and Variety to that of *Xanthus* in the 21st Book of *Homer's Iliad*, against *Achilles*.

Whence

430 STADIUS'S THEBAID. Book IX.

Whence with fresh Juice the show'ry Bow is fed,
 And golden Crops the *Tyrian* Fields o'erspread :
 But when he heard from far the doleful Sound, 575
 In which the Murmurs of the Surge were drown'd,
 He lifts his Neck, with shaggy Moss o'ergrown,
 And Temples, circled with an icy Crown ;
 And rushing on, a full-grown Pine o'erturns,
 As down the Stream he rolls his copious Urns. 580
 The Woods and lesser Brooks his Progress eye
 With Wonder, as he leaves his Channel dry.
 His stony Channel, and with dashing Waves
 From either Bank the Slime invet'rate laves.
 Sonorous in his Course, the River roars, 585
 And foaming, far o'ertops the subject Shores ;
 While from his Sea-green Beard in many a Rill
 The lucid Drops upon his Breast distill.
 One Nymph alone he meets, who soon makes known
 His Grandson's Fate, and Evils soon his own, 590
 Presses his Hand, and the fell *Grecian* shews,
Hippomedon, sole Author of his Woes.
 Suspended in Mid-Air the wrathful Flood
 Awhile, with all his Waves encircled, stood,
 Then shook his Horns, with verdant Sedge entwin'd;
 And thus he vents his Turbulence of Mind. 596
 Is this, O Ruler of the Gods above,
 The best Reward my Services must prove ?
 Wink'd I for this (thyself our honour'd Guest,
 At Deeds, which Friendship, and not Fear suppress'd)
 As when a borrow'd Pair of Horns adorn'd 601
 Thy guilty Brows, or *Phœbe* was suborn'd
 To lengthen out the Night, and (oh ! Disgrace
 To the whole Sex, and all the *Theban* Race)

Proud

Proud *Semele* to *Juno*'s Rank aspir'd, 605
 And for a Dow'r ethereal Flames requir'd.
 Was it so slight a Favour to defend
 Thy foster'd Offspring, and their Youth befriend?
 For Refuge to this Stream *Tyrinthius* came,
 And here, O *Bacchus*, temper'd we thy Flame. 610
 Behold! what Heaps of Carnage choak my Stream,
 What shiver'd Weapons on my Surface gleam!
 War rages thro' our Ford, the Billows breathe
 Confusion, Rout and Death: above, beneath
 Souls wander, recent from their bloody Doom, 615
 And hov'ring, spread o'er either Bank a Gloom.
 All Votaries invoke my chrystral Wave
 With holy Yellings: 'tis my Praise to lave
 In the clear Stream great *Bacchus*' sacred Horns,
 And the soft *Thyrsus* that his Head adorns. 620
 In vain I seek the Straits.—Not *Strymon*'s Flood,
 Dire as it seems, is thus deform'd with Blood;
 Nor foaming *Hebrus* bears the Stain of Gore
 So deep, when warring *Mars* invades the Shore.
 Remember, that the Stream which now demands 625
Jove's timely Aid, deserves it at his Hands.
 Does *Bacchus* blot his Parents from his Mind,
 Or is *Hydaspes* more to Peace inclin'd?
 Nor thou, whom the gay Spoils and Trophies, torn
 From brave *Crenæus*, hapless Boy, adorn. 630
 Shalt pay to *Inachus* the votive Crown,
 Or hail with conq'ring Shouts thy native Town,

v. 621. *Not Strymon's Flood*] *Strymon* and *Hebrus* are two Rivers of *Thrace*: the one famous for the Battles between the Pygmies and Cranes, and the other for those of *Mars*.

Unless, the mortal Progeny of Earth
 I prove, and more than human is thy Birth.
 Raging he spake, and to the ready Wave 635
 A Token of his vengeful Purpose gave.
 First bleak *Cithaeron* from his hoary Brows
 Pours many a Rill of long collected Snows ;
Aeson then by Stealth his Wants supplies
 With Streams, that from his op'ning Springs arise. 640
 The scrutinizing God himself explores
 Earth's hollow Entrails, and recruits his Stores
 From Marshes, Pools, and Lakes with Filth o'erspread ;
 And lifting to the Skies his dropping Head,
 Exhausts the Clouds of Moisture, and inhales 645
 The humid Vapours lodg'd in show'ry Gales.
 And now o'er both his Banks *Ismenos* rose,
 And all around a foamy Deluge throws.
Hippomedon, who fording half the Tide,
 Its greatest Depth and utmost Rage had try'd, 650
 Unbath'd his Shoulders, wonders as he sees
 The Flood invading them by quick Degrees.
 Swelling on either Side, the Billows form
 A watry Bulwark: As when some huge Storm
 Drains the *Pleiades*, in Winter's Reign, 655
 And dashes black *Orion* on the Main.
 Thus the *Theumessian* Stream the Warrior toss'd
 On its salt Surface: on his Shield imboss'd
 He breaks his Fury: o'er its Orb he boils
 With black'ning Foam, and all Resistance foils. 660
 Though oft repuls'd, in greater Troops again
 The Surges mount.—The Hero toils in vain ;
 For not content with his own liquid Force,
 The rapid Current gathers in its Course

Beams,

Beams, Stones torn from the Bottom, Shrubs that grow
On the green Verge, and whirls them at the Foe. 666
Unequal hangs the Fight: more fierce he raves,
As undismay'd the Chief his Anger braves:
For neither does he turn his Back, or yield
To any Threats; but bending to the Field

670

His Steps, still boldly meets the rushing Tides,
And, with his Shield oppos'd, the Flood divides.
His Feet upheld, still with the moving Ground
He moves, the slipp'ry Pebbles floating round,
And struggles, while his Knees relax'd with Toil, 675
Far from beneath him slides the slimy Soil.

Ismenos say, (th' upbraiding Warrior cries)
From whence these sudden Gusts of Passion rise?
Whence hast thou drawn this Strength? some mightier
Friend

Than *Bacchus* must thy desp'rate Cause defend: 680

For, till the present War, thy peaceful Flood
Was never crimson'd but with Female Blood,
When Pipes unequal at your Orgies roar,
And madd'ning Matrons stain your Rites with Gore.
He said: and now the Pow'r himself appears, 685

And o'er the Waves his Head spontaneous rears.

A Load of Filth to his marr'd Vifage clung,
Mute was his Rage, and silent was his Tongue.

Now Face to Face the God and Hero stood,
When, rising to the Stroke, the furious Flood

690

Impell'd a leafless Oak: Four Times unmov'd
The dire Assault and thund'ring Shock he prov'd:
At length, his Shield struck down, the Chief withdrew
By tardy Steps, the Billows thick pursue,

E e

Back'd

Back'd by their Leader; while with hissing Sound, 695
 A Show'r of Darts and Stones is rain'd around,
 And rang'd along the Beach his *Theban* Foes
 His Landing with pretended Arms oppose.
 What can he do, besieg'd with Waves and Spears?
 Nor Hope of Flight, nor glorious Death appears. 700
 Just on the Brink ('twas doubtful if it stood
 Fix'd on the Land, or rooted in the Flood)
 An Ash with far-projecting Branches grew,
 And o'er the Stream a Shade wide-spreading threw.
 Hither he sped his Course in quest of Aid, 705
 (For how could he the guarded Beach invade?)
 And snatch'd a Branch, his slidd'ring Steps to stay,
 But, faithless to his Grasp, the Tree gives Way,
 Beneath his dragging Weight uprooted falls,
 An earthy Fragment in the Water hales, 710
 Torn from the Border, and from Side to Side
 In Length extended, bridges the rough Tide.
 Herè meet the rushing Waves; the settling Mud
 Sinks to the Bottom.—Now the circling Flood

v. 701. *Just on the Brink*] This beautiful Incident is borrowed from the 21st Book of the Iliad, but diversified and enlarged with many additional Circumstances.

—Ο δὲ πτελέων ἔλε χερσὶν
 Εὐφυέα, μεγάλῳ, οὐδὲν πρώτῳ
 Κρημόν απαντα διάσειν, ἐπίχε δὲ καλὰ ρέεθρος
 "Οζοισιν πυκνοῖσι, γεφύρωσεν δὲ μιν αὐτὸν,
 Εἴσι πᾶσ' ἐριπός. —

Some of the Verses (as Mr. Pope has observed of Homer's) run hoarse, full, and sonorous, like the Torrent they describe; others by their broken Cadences and sudden Stops, image the Difficulty, Labour and Interruption of the Hero's March against it. The Fall of the Tree, the tearing up of the Bank, the rushing of the Branches in the Water, are all put into such Words, that almost every Letter corresponds in its Sound, and echoes to the Sense in this Particular.

Invades

Invades the Neck and Shoulders of the Chief: 715
 At length, oppress'd with more than vulgar Grief,
 He cries:—O *Mars*, shall I resign my Breath
 In this vile River? such inglorious Death
 Attends the Swain, whom to the neigh'ring Deepes,
 Increas'd by sudden Show'rs, a Torrent sweeps. 720
 Why fell I not beneath the hostile Sword?
Argos had then wept o'er my Corse restor'd.
 Mov'd by these Pray'rs, at length *Saturnia* seeks
 The Courts of *Jove*, and thus her Spouse bespeaks.
 How long, illustrious Sire of Gods above, 725
 Shall wretched *Greece* thy studied Vengeance prove?
 By *Pallas* hated, *Tydeus* press'd the Plain,
 And silent *Delphos* wails her Augur slain.
 Say, shall *Hippomedon* whose native Place
 Is *Argos*, sprung of fam'd *Mycenæ*'s Race, 730

v. 717. O *Mars*, shall I resign my Breath] The Behaviour and Speech of *Hippomedon* have so many Precedents, that I should not know from what Original it is copied, had not the Poet himself left a Mark of Distinction, which is the Allusion to the Shepherd.

Ἄντε μὲν ὁφελός ἐκτῷρ πτεῖναι, δὲ ἐνθαδὲ τίτεαφ' ἄειστο
 Τῷρ ἀγαθὸν μὲν ἐπιφύτεο, ἀγαθὸς δὲ καν εἰξενάγειτε.
 Νῦν δέ με λαμπαδέω δινάτω εἰμαρό ἀλονα
 Ἐρχόμεντ' ἐν μεραλλω ποταμω, ὡς παιδα συφοροῦν,
 Οὐ δέ τ' ἐναυλοῦ ἀποέργει χειμῶνι περιποτε.

Homer again in his *Odyssey*, *Virgil* and *Lucan* have all similar Passages in their respective Works; which Circumstance, I think, sufficiently clears up the two former from the Imputation of having represented their Heroes as Cowards. They do not lament, that they must die, but only dislike the Mode of Death. Drowning, it was thought by the Ancients, hindered their Bodies from being buried: we must not wonder, therefore, that they abominated it, as they could not be admitted into the Number of the blessed, until they had received the funeral Rites.—See *Palinurus*'s Speech to *Æneas* in the sixth Book of *Virgil's Aeneid*.

Deserted by the Pow'r, whose Grace he woo'd,
 Glut the fell Monsters of the Sea with Food?
 The vanquish'd sure have shar'd the fun'ral Rite.
 Where are the Flames that must succeed the Fight
 By *Theses* kindled?—He receives her Pray'r, 735
 And makes the Object of her Suit his Care,
 His Eyes turn'd back on *Thebes*.—The Stream again
 Sinks at his Nod, and spreads a level Plain.
 Above the Surface now his Shoulders rise,
 And Hope returning sparkles in his Eyes 740
 So, when a Tempest rais'd by Winds, subsides,
 And *Neptune*'s Trident calms the ruffled Tides,
 The Rocks lift up their Heads to Sight long-lost,
 And the glad Seamen eye the wish'd-for Coast,
 Ah! what avails it to have gain'd the Beach, 745
 Since still he stands within the Javelin's Reach?
 The *Tyrian* Cohorts press on ev'ry Side,
 No more the Mail and Shield his Body hide;
 But the whole Man's expos'd to Death.—The Blood
 That long had lain congeal'd beneath the Flood, 750
 Now issues copious, thaw'd in open Air,
 And all his honest Wounds again lie bare.
 Drain'd of Life's Juice, relax'd appears each Vein,
 Nor his chill'd Feet his trembling Frame sustain.
 He drops; as from some Mountain's airy Crown, 755
 Torn by the Winds, a tall Oak tumbles down,

741. *So, when a Tempest*] This is a very elegant Similitude and well-adapted to the Circumstances of the Person. Our Poet would not, as he had before compared him to a Rock for his Fortitude, degrade him in his Distress by illustrating his Situation in a meener Comparison, and therefore compares him to a Rock again.

Servatur ad imum
 Qualis ab incæpto processit, & sibi constat.

v. 755. *As from some Mountain's airy Crown*] Homer, Virgil, and *Silius*

Which late was seen with shading Boughs to rise,
Its Root in Earth, its Summit in the Skies.
Whilst, as a Prelude to its Fate, its Head
Threatning it nods, the Grove and Mountain dread, 760
Lest falling, it deform the sylvan Reign,
And spread a Length of Ruin on the Plain.
Yet no one durst despoil the Chief bereft
Of Life: untouched his Sword and Helm were left.
Scarce trusting to their Eyes, aloof they stand, 765
And fear the Blade he clinches in his Hand.
Hypseus at length their Doubts remov'd, withdrew
The Casque and his stern Face disclos'd to View:
Then boastful thro' the *Theban* Ranks he goes,
And on his Sabre's Point high-glitt'ring shows 770

Silius Italicus have all Comparisons derived from this Subject, which I shall lay before the Reader, without anticipating his Judgment by any Remarks of my own.

—Ο δ' οὐ κανίποτα καμάτη πέσεν αὐγεῖσθαις,
Ηρά τ' οὐ εἰκαμενή ἔλεθος μεταλλοιο πεφύκει
Λείη, ἀτὰρ τέ οἱ ὅδοι ἐπ' ἀκροτάτη πεφύασσον·
Τὴν μὲν θεοφράστη πηγὰς ἀνύπερ αἰθανι σιδήρω,
Ἐξέταμεν οὐφρεύς τον κάμψην πεπικαλέσσει δίφρω,
Η μέν αἰδομένη κεῖται ποτεμοῖο παρεργαστοῖο ὄχθας.

Iliad. Lib. 4. V. 482.

Ac veluti in summis antiquam montibus ornum,
Cum ferro accisam crebrisque bipennibus instant
Eruere agricolæ certatim; illa usque minatur,
Et tremefacta comam concussa vertice nutat;
Vulneribus donec paulatim evicta supremum
Ingemuit, traxitque jugis avulsa ruinam.

Æneid, Lib. 2 Ver. 626.

Ceu Zephyrus quatit antiquos ubi flamine lucos,
Fronte super tremuli vix tota cacuminis hærens
Jactatur, pariter nido luctante volucris.
Procubuit tandem multa devicta securi
Suffugium infelix miseris, & inhospita quercus,
Elisitque virum spatiofa membra ruina. Bellum Pun. L. 5.

The Spoil suspended, and exulting cry'd :
 Behold the Conq'ror of the bloody Tide,
 And vow'd Avenger of great *Tydeus* dead,
Hippomedon ! — how well his Schemes have sped !
 Brave *Capaneus* beheld the glorying Chief 775
 From far, but from the Foe conceal'd his Grief,
 And as the brandish'd Weapon he survey'd,
 Accosts it thus : — Be present with your Aid,
 My Arm and Sword ; so ye assist my Stroke,
 No other Deities I will invoke. 780
 This said, elate in Thought the Warrior glows,
 And rushes, self-secure of all his Vows.
 Now thro' the Shield, which strong Bull-Hides infold,
 And brazen Mail, all rough with Scales of Gold,
 The trembling Javelin passes, and arrests 785
 The Prince, deep-buried in his gen'rous Breasts.
 He sinks, as some high Tow'r that long hath stood
Bellona's fiercest Shocks, at length subdu'd
 With oft repeated Strokes it thunders down,
 And opens to the Foe the fenceless Town. 790
 Then striding o'er th' expiring Chief, he cries :
 The Fame of Death we grant thee : lift thine Eyes,
 And mark th' illustrious Author of the Wound :
 Go — vaunt of this in the drear *Stygian* Sound.

v. 787. *As some high Tow'r*] Our Author in this Comparison has set the *Theban* Hero in a stronger Light than the *Grecian*. — He illustrates the falling of *Hippomedon* by that of an Oak, but compares *Hypseus* to a Tower, which is more expressive of the Character of a valiant Leader : a Tower being the Defence of a City, as a valiant Commander is of his Army. — This Simile, though not very long, is paraphrased from the Verse of *Homer* subjoined.

"*Ἑτερὲ δὲ ὡς ὁ τοιούτοις ἐνεργεῖν νοέιν.*

v. 793. *And mark th' illustrious*] *Eneas* closes his Address of Com-
 mision to *Lausus* in much the same boastful Manner.

. The Sword and Head-piece seiz'd, he takes again 795
 The Target, wrested from the *Grecian* slain,
 And placing o'er the Corse, says with a Groan:
 Receive these hostile Trophies with thy own,
 And sleep secure, that rescu'd from the Foe,
 Thy Manes shall the Rites of Burial know. 800
 But while thy solemn Fun'rals we prepare,
 Accept this Earne⁵ of my future Care.
 Thus long the Combat hung in even Scales,
 And either Host alternately prevails:
 Mars aids them both, like an impartial Lord, 805
 And with commutual Wounds the Battle goar'd.
 In Turn they mourn the *Greek* and *Theban* Chief,
 And from each other's Sorrows find Relief.
 Mean while, disturb'd by Visions of the Night,
 And Dreams, * th' *Arcadian* Princess bends her Flight
 To *Ladon*'s gelid Spring, to wash away 811
 Her noxious Sleep, before the destin'd Day.
 Loose was her Dress, dishevell'd was her Hair,
 And, as the Rites requir'd, her Feet were bare.
 For anxious Thoughts and weighty Cares opprest 815
 Her Mind in Sleep, and broke her nightly Rest.
 Oft Times the Spoils, which she had sacred made,
 Torn from the Shrine, or fallen she survey'd:
 Oft Times she fancied, that expell'd the Groves,
 In Tombs and Sepulchres unknown she roves, 820
 And that her Victor Son's return'd again,
 Yet only sees his Courser, Arms and Train.

Hoc tamen infelix miserum solabere mortem:
 Æneæ magni dextrâ cadis. *Æn. 10. Line 829.*

* *Atalanta*, Mother of *Parthenopæus*.

Untouch'd the Quivers from her Shoulders fall,
 And her own Effigies that grac'd the Hall,
 Was heard to hiss and crackle in the Flames: 825
 But the past Night the greatest Woes proclaims,
 T'was this, that fill'd her Soul with anxious Fears,
 And call'd forth all a Mother's tender Cares.

In fair *Arcadia*'s blissful Bow'rs there stood
 A noted Oak: the Nymphs that haunt the Wood, 830
 Had vow'd it sacred to their Guardian-Maid,
 And at the Rites divine due Off'rings paid.
 Here she was wont her Bow and Shafts to place,
 And high display the Trophies of the Chace,
 The Lion's brindled Hide its Boughs adorns, 835
 The Boar's sharp Tusks, and Stag's wide-branching
 Horns.

Such Honours heap this Monarch of the Grove,
 That scarce the crowded Limbs have Room to move;
 While the resplendent Steel destroys the Shade,
 Dispells the Gloom, and lightens all the Glade. 840
 As haply from the Hills she took her Way,
 Tir'd with the longsome Labours of the Day,
 And in her Hand a Bear's grim Visage bore,
 Yet warm with Life, and reeking still with Gore,
 She spies the Foliage strew'd upon the Ground, 845
 And the hack'd Branches, red with many a Wound.
 At length a Nymph informs her, *Bacchus* rag'd,
 Against the Greeks with all his Priests engag'd.
 While, dreaming, thus she groans, and beats her
 Breast,

Sleep quits her Eyes, and from the Couch of Rest, 850
 Starting as from a Trance, in vain she seeks
 The pearly Current that bedew'd her Cheeks.

Thrice then she bathes her Treffles in the Stream,
T'avert the Mischiefs imag'd in the Dream,
Adds magic Sounds, impower'd to controul 855
The Mother's Grief, and chear her anxious Soul,
And haft'ning to the weapon'd Virgin's Fane,
What Time the Dew-drops glitter on the Plain,
Beholds again with Joy the verdant Wood,
And the known Oak unchang'd, and free from Blood.
Now in the hallow'd Vestible she stands, 861
And thus invokes the Pow'r with lifted Hands
O sylvan Queen, whose more than female Arms
I bear, nor mindful to improve my Charms
Like others of my Sex pursue afar 865
Thy hardy Steps, and dare the savage War.
With Amazons I boast an equal Name,
Nor do the *Colchian* Dames outshine my Fame.
If to no Rites of *Bacchus* I resort,
Nor mix in nightly Choirs and wanton Sport; 870
If true to thee, I wield no wreathed Dart,
Nor in unseemly Actions bear a Part,
But though defil'd in Hymen's hateful Bed,
Pursue the Toils, to which I first was bred,
And to the Chace and rural Shades inclin'd, 875
For thee reserve a pure, unwedded Mind.
Nor in the dark Recesses of the Grove
Hid I the Token of my vicious Love,

v. 878. *Hid I the Token of my vicious Love?*] The Reader must take Notice, that the Poet only calls this Love vicious, inasmuch as it was a Breach of Vow, all Virgins, who entered into Diana's Service, being obliged at their Initiation, to make a Vow of perpetual Virginity.

But

But op'ning all my Guilt, without Deceit
 Produc'd the Boy, and plac'd him at thy Feet. 880
 Nor Blood degen'rate fallies in his Veins;
 His early Virtue justify'd my Pains:
 For, when an Infant, he could scarcely go,
 He stretch'd his little Hands, and lisp'd a Bow:
 Him (ah! what om'ous Dreams my Soul dismay, 885
 And damp my ruffled Spirits?) him, I pray,
 Who trusting to thy Aid (his Mother's Right)
 In youthful Folly rushes to the Fight,
 Restore victorious, or (if I demand
 Too much) uninjur'd to his native Land. 890
 Here may he toil, and bear thy Arms alone:
 But O! remove these Signs of Ills unknown.
 In Bow'rs *Arcadian* why should *Bacchus* reign,
 And *Theban* Gods encroach on thy Domain?
 Why to myself (but may the watchful Throng 895
 Of Dæmons render this Construction wrong)
 Take I the Mischiefs, shadow'd in the Oak?
 But, if the Gods intend this dreaded Stroke,
 O mild *Dictynna*, by the Mother's Throes,
 And yon fraternal Orb that recent glows, 900

v. 896. *Of Dæmons*] I think the Word Dæmons in this Place a more proper Term than Gods, as the former, being a subordinate Class of Deities, were supposed by the Antients to superintend the Affairs of Mankind in a more particular Manner. — In the least Deviation from the Original I shall always hold it incumbent on me to give my Reasons for it.

v. 899. *O mild Dictynna*] If the Reader has any Curiosity to know the Origine of this Name, let him attend to what *Laetantius* says on this Subject. — *Briton*, a *Cretan* Virgin and Daughter of *Mars* was consecrated to *Diana*; and to avoid an attempt made by *Minos* on her Chastity, threw herself into the Sea, and was taken up in Fishing-Nets, which in Greek are called *Dictua*. Soon after this the *Cretans* were punished by a heavy Pestilence, that rag'd amongst them, and were informed, that they could not remove it but by building

Transfix me with thy Darts, and set me free;
 Tis Ease, 'tis Mercy to a Wretch like me:
 And, if a martial Death must end his Date,
 Let him, O let him first bemoan my Fate.

Here paus'd the Queen, and wept; nor wept alone: 905
 For Tears descended from the sculptur'd Stone.

While thus she press'd the sacred Threshold, bare,
 And brush'd the clay-cold Altars with her Hair;
 Abruptly the rough Goddess leaves her, flies
 O'er *Mænalo*s, high-branching in the Skies, 910
 Directs her Progress to the *Theban* Town
 By a bright, inner Path to all unknown
 But Deities, and from a Point on high
 O'er Earth's vast Globe extends her boundless Eye.
 And now near *Helicon*'s inspiring Source 915
 She halts awhile (compleated half her Course)

building a Temple to the offended Goddess, which they did, and called it *Dictynnae* from the Fishing-Nets.

v. 906. *For Tears descended from the sculptur'd Stone*] The Poet means the marble Statuē of *Diana*: *Lucan*, speaking of the Prognostics, which preceded the civil Wars, says.

The Face of Grief each marble Statue wears,
 And *Parian* Gods and Heroes stand in Tears.

v. 908. *And brush'd*] The Words in the Original are;

— *Gelidas verrentem crinibus aras.*

In the former Editions it was *verentem*, which *Bernartius* has judiciously altered to *verrentem*, and supported it by the following Quotations.

“ *Stratæ passim matres, crinibus templa verrentes, veniam irarum*
 “ *cœlæstium exposcunt.* — *Livy*, Book 3.

“ *Matronæ circa deūm delubra discurrunt, crinibus passis aras*
 “ *verrentes.* D^o. Book 26.

“ *Tunc Psyche uberi fletu rigans deæ vestigia, humumque ver-*
 “ *rens crinibus suis.* *Apuleius*, Book 5.

“ *Matræ Italæ pensa manibus abjecerunt, parvos Liberos abrep-*
 “ *tos ad templa traxerunt, ibi ædes sacras passo capillo suo quæque*
 “ *verrebat.* — *Mamertinus*, *Panegyrick on Maximian*.

When

When through a Cloud far-beaming she discern'd
 Her Brother from th' *Aonian* War return'd,
 Uncouth his Visage show'd, disguis'd with Grief,
 For much he mourn'd the Prophet, luckless Chief. 920
 More fiercely glow the Planets in Embrace,
 And paint with crimson Streaks th' aërial Space ;
 Loud clash the Bows, and thro' the Skies around
 The Quivers echo back the solemn Sound.

Apollo took the Word, and thus bespeaks : 925

Full well I know, my dearest Sister seeks
 Th' *Arcadian* Youth, who dares beyond his Might,
 And mixes, fearless, in th' unequal Fight.

His Mother sues, and would th' Immortals give
 Assent to save, the Warrior long should live. 930

Myself (it shames me, that I could not aid,)
 The Prophet with his Arms and Wreaths survey'd,
 When urg'd by Fate, he sunk to deepest Hell,
 And look'd at me for Succour, as he fell.

Nor could I keep my Car, and Earth re-join, 935
 Tho' stern, nor worthy more of Rites divine.

Thou seest my silent Dome, and wailing Cave :
 This sole Reward my pious Comrades have.

No more my unavailing Help implore ;
 Heav'n wills, we give the fruitless Labour o'er : 940

His Hour draws on, the Destinies ordain,
 Nor are our Oracles believ'd in vain.

Thus all confus'd, the heav'nly Maid reply'd
 In Turn : his Want of Days then be supply'd
 With lasting Fame : some Recompence bestow, 945
 And add in Glory what in Life you owe.

Nor shall he scape unpunish'd for the Deed,
 By whom Fate dooms the guiltless Chief to bleed,

Our raging Arrows shall avenge the slain,
And fix the quiv'ring Dastard to the Plain. 950
She ceas'd; nor willing to his Lips applies
Her vermil Cheeks, but to the Conflict flies.
Now fiercer burns the Fight on either Side,
And mutual Vengeance swells the purple Tide
For their lost Leaders.—Here the pensive Band 955
Of *Hypseus* mourns, depriv'd of his Command;
There brave *Hippomedon*'s stout Warriors glow,
Nor screen their Bosoms from the menac'd Blow.
Fiercely they give, serenely take a Wound,
Strive hard to gain, but never quit their Ground. 960
In close Array they move, and to their Foes
The Seat of Honour, not of Shame expose,
When swift *Latonia*, gliding thro' the Skies,
On *Dirce*'s Summit stands with watchful Eyes.
Beneath her Step the waving Forests nod, 965
And quaking Mountains own the present God;

v. 953. *Now fiercer burns the Fight*] There is great Strength of Imagery and Expression in these, and the following Lines; But as I am conscious, my Translation will not make my Assertion good, I shall transcribe the Author's own Words: and in this, as well as in all other Places, where I pass Encomiums, I hope the Reader will always understand them as spoken of the Original.

At pugna ereptis major crudescit utrimque
Regibus, alternosque ciet vindicta Furores,
Hypseos hinc turmæ, desolatumque magistro
Agmen, at hinc gravius fremit Hippomedontis adempti
Orba cohors. Præbent obnixi pectora ferro:
Idem ardor ravidis externum haurire cruorem,
Ac fudisse suum: nec se vestigia mutant.
Stat cuneo defixa acies, hostique cruento
Dant animas, et terga negant. —

v. 966. *The present God*] Availing myself of the Precedent, which Mr. Pope has given me, I have not scrupled to use the Word God for Goddess in my Version. The Greeks apply Θεός indiscriminately for

As when at fruitful *Niobe* she bent
 Her Shafts, and all her well-stor'd Quiver spent.
 The youthful Warrior in the Center stood,
 And gaz'd, exulting, o'er the Scene of Blood. 970
 A Hunting Steed transports him o'er the Plains,
 New to the Fight, and Guidance of the Reins;
 A Tiger's motly Hide his Back o'erspread,
 And beat with gilded Claws, as on he sped.
 His neck was muscular, his Mane, confin'd 975
 In twisted Ringlets mocks the fanning Wind.
 The Poitrel with his snow-white Teeth he champ'd,
 And with black Spots his dappled Chest was stamp'd.
 The Rider too in Vests embroider'd shone,
 (These *Atalanta* wrought, and these alone) 980
 A costly Robe o'er the gay *Tunic* lies,
 That twice had drank the noblest *Tyrian* Dyes,
 Bound in a Chain, with radiant Jaspers strung:
 The Target from his Steed's left Shoulder hung.
 His weighty Sword, girt to his tender Side, 985
 Blaz'd at each Motion with a martial Pride.
 A golden Clasp the circling Belt confin'd.
 The Youth exults, as in the passing Wind

for both Genders. Our Poet himself in his fourth Book, speaking of *Diana*, says.

Nec caret umbra Deo.

And the chaste and correct *Virgil* in the second Book of his *Aeneid* says;

Descendo, ac ducente Deo, flammam inter et hostes
 Expedior. —

v. 969. *The youthful Warrior*] *Statius*, more in the *Ovidian* than *Virgilian* Taste, has given full Reins to his Fancy in describing the Horse, Habit and Person of this juvenile Adventurer, like the ancient Priests, who, before a Sacrifice, trick'd out their Victims with Flowers, Garlands, and such like Ornaments.

He

He hears the Sheath, the Quiver that depends, 989

And the Chain's Clank, that from his Helm descends.

One while he shakes his Casque with Gems inchas'd,

And nodding Crest with various Plumage grac'd;

But, when his Head is heated, throws for Air

His Helm aside, and leaves his Visage bare.

More charming then his glossy Ringlets shine, 995

His vivid Eyes, that scatter'd Rays divine,

And rosy Cheeks, o'er which the Down began

But faintly to appear, and promise Man.

Nor does he plume himself with Beauty's Praise;

But strives to lessen it by various Ways, 1000

And knits his Brows, yet Anger cloaths his Face

With Majesty, and heightens ev'ry Grace.

The Thebans, mindful of their Children, yield

Their Ground thro' Pity, nor dispute the Field

With the Boy-Warrior: he their Flight pursues 1005

With Darts, and tempts the Fray, which they refuse.

The Tyrian Damsels, who behold the Fight

From high Theumesus, feast their greedy Sight

On his fair Features, seen thro' the Disguise

Of War, and vent their Flame in secret Sighs. 1010

Grief touch'd Diana's Bosom, as she ey'd

The too rash Youth, ah! how can can I (she cry'd

While copious ran the pearly Stream of Woe)

Ward off, or e'en delay th' impending Blow?

Spontaneous hast thou sought then, cruel Boy, 1015

And are the Perils of the Fight thy Joy?

Alas! thy early Courage is thy Bane,

And Glory spurs thee to the deathful Plain.

Scarce till of late thro' the *Mænalian* Grove,

Without a Guide, securely cou'dst thou rove; 1020

Nor

Nor was it safe to pierce the wood-land Shade
 And Haunts of Beasts, without thy Mother's Aid,
 Whose sylvan Arms, the Quiver, Shafts, and Bow,
 Thy shoulders scarce suffic'd to bear till now.
 To our deaf Altars, weeping, she repairs, 1025
 And wearies Heav'n with unavailing Pray'rs;
 Whilst in the Toils of Fight thou dost rejoice,
 And listen; pleas'd, to the shrill Clarion's Voice.
 Go then, secure of an immortal Crown,
 And to thy Mother doom'd to die alone. 1030
 She ceas'd, and his victorious Fame to raise,
 And crown his Exit with distinguish'd Praise,
 Rush'd thro' the Lines (a dusky Veil of Clouds
 From mortal Eyes the bashful Goddess shrowds)
 And stole the faithless Arrows that he bore, 1035
 Recruiting th' emptied Quiver with a Store
 Of ointed Shafts: of these none flies in vain,
 Nor touches, innocent of Blood, the Plain.
 She sprinkles then the Warrior and his Horse
 With Dews ambrosial, lest his wounded Corse 1040

v. 1039. *She sprinkles then the Warrior*] This Fiction is imitated from Homer's Iliad, Book the 6th, where Apollo discharges the same kind Office to Sarpedon:

— Οὐδὲ ἄρε τατρὸς ἀνηκάστοιν' Απόλλων·
 Βῆ δὲ κατ' Ἰδαιῶν ὁρέων ἐς φύλοπιν αἰγῆν,
 Αὐτίκα δ' εἰς βεβλέων Σαρπηδόνα δίον ἀέρας
 Πολλὸν ἀπὸ πρὸ φέρων λόσεν ποταμοῖο ῥῆσι,
 Χρῖσεν τὸ ἀμφοροῖην. —

And again in the 19th;

Πατρόκλω δ' αὖτ' ἀμφοροῖην καὶ γένταρ τερπεῖσθε
 Στάξει κατὰ ρινῶν, οὐαὶ οἱ χρῶσι ἐμπειδεῖσι.

Virgil has also imitated it;

— Spargitque salubres
 Ambrosiaæ succos, et odoriferam Panaceam.

Should

Should be abus'd, before he yields his Breath;
And, as a Charm to break the Pangs of Death,
Add's holy Murmurs, and mysterious Songs.

Such as in secret Caves the *Colchian* Throng
She teaches, at the Season of Repose, 1045
And shews each noxious Plant and Herb that grows.
More furious now he deals his Shafts around,
To Reason deaf: his Wrath no Limits bound;
But, mindless of his Country, Self, and Friends,
The fated Darts without Reserve he sends. 1050

The youthful Lion thus, whose tender Age
Was nurs'd with Blood, the Source of savage Rage,
By his *Gætulian* Dam, when he surveys
The Mane, that o'er his Neck redundant plays
And his sharp Claws, pretended for the Fight, 1055
He springs forth, conscious of his nat'r'l Right
From the loath'd Den, and with a sour Disdain
Of proffer'd Food, explores his new Domain.
Say, valiant Youth, who press'd their native Mead,
By thy *Parrhasian* Bow to Death decreed? 1060

v. 1051. *The youthful Lion*] This Simile is a strong Proof of the Fruitfulness of the Poet's Imagination, and judicious Taste. It is bold with Correctness, natural without being vulgar, and copious without Prolixity: and what is still adding to its Merit, is that it is an Original.

v. 1059. *Say, valiant Youth*] This beautiful Interrogation is imitated from the 16th Book of the Iliad.

*Ἐνδε τίνα πρωτον, τίνα δὲ ὕστερον ἐξενάριξες
Πατρόκλεις, ὅτε δῆ σε θεοὶ θύσατο δὲ κάλισταν.

Virgil has also copied it;

Quem telo primum, quem postremum, aspera Virgo!
Dejicis? aut quot humi morientia corpora fundis?

I shall transcribe Mr. Pope's judicious Observations on the above-cited Passage in *Homer*, as they are equally applicable to our Author's. — The Poet in a very moving and solemn Way turns his

Choræbus of Tanagre spurn'd the Field
 The first. Between the Margin of the Shield
 And Helm, the Dart a narrow Passage found:
 His Jaws are crimson'd with the gushing Wound,
 And o'er his Face the sacred Venom glows, 1065
 Wide-spreading.—At *Eurytion* then he throws
 A triple-pointed Shaft: the Weapon flies,
 And deep in his left Eye-ball buried lies.
 The Dart extracted from the Wound by Force,
 Against the Foe *Eurytion* bends his Course; 1070
 But ah! what cannot heav'nly Shafts?—again
 An Arrow speeds, unerring, o'er the Plain,
 And doubles his Distress: yet still the Foe
 He chac'd, as far as Memory could go;
 Then fell, and *Ida* crush'd, who near him stood: 1075
 Here, midst the Rage of War and Scene of Blood,
 In thick short Sobs he gasps away his Breath,
 Devoting Friends and Foes alike to Death.
 The Sons of *Abas* next his Fury prove;
Cydon, subservient to th' incestuous Love 1080
 Of his sad Sister, and fair *Argus* fam'd
 For his sleek Hair.—Pierc'd by a Lance well-aim'd,
 Young *Cydon*'s Parts obscene lie bare to View;
 A Dart oblique thro' t'other's Temples flew.

Discourse to *Patroclus*. He does not accost his Muse, as it is usual with him to do, but enquires of the Hero himself who was the first, and who the last, who fell by his Hand? This Address distinguishes and signalizes *Patroclus*, (to whom *Homer* uses it more frequently, than I remember on any other Occasion? as if he was some Genius or divine Being, and at the same time it is very pathetical, and apt to move our Compassion.

v. 1083. Young *Cydon*'s Parts obscene lie bare to View.] Our Author makes the incestuous *Cydon* punished in that Part, with which he had offended. This is poetical Justice in the strictest Sense of the Word.

In one the Steel, in one the Feather's seen, 1085
 The Blood flows down from both, and stains the Green.
 On all alike th' impartial Darts descend
 His peerless Charms gay *Lamus* ill defend;
 Young *Aeolus* fills an untimely Grave:
 Nor cou'd his mitred Honours *Lygdon* save. 1090
 Fair *Lamus* mourns his Face: a Lance impales
 The Groin of *Lygdon*: *Aeolus* bewails
 His snowy Brows.—The first unhappy Swain
Eubœn own'd: on *Thisbe*'s rocky Plain
 The second dwelt: the third *Amyclæ* bore, 1095
 Yet never, never shall behold him more.
 Such is his Art, no Missile flies in vain,
 And such their Force, that all they wound, are slain.
 His Hand, ne'er rests, but shaft to shaft succeeds,
 And the long *Hiss* runs echoing o'er the Meads, 1100
 T'was almost past Belief, a single Bow,
 And one weak Hand cou'd work such mighty Woe.
 Where least the Foe suspects, his Darts he sends;
 And oft, in Act to shoot, his Arms extends,
 Then sudden quits the Mark: when they draw nigh;
 He flies, and turning lets his Arrows fly. 1106
 To Vengeance now the Sons of *Cadmus* rise,
 Wrath in their Breasts, Amazement in their Eyes,
 And first *Amphion*, sprung of Race divine,
 (From *Jove* himself he drew his natal Line) 1110

v. 1097. *Such is his Art*] I should be thought too mistrustful of the Reader's Taste, should I point out to him the Beauties of these Lines. My Version, I confess, falls infinitely short of the Original, and indeed the

Solo respicit arcu.
 cannot be rendered in our Language with a suitable Dignity.

Unknowing yet, what Carnage had o'erspread
 The fatal Champain, thus insulting, said.
 How long wilt thou protract thy vital Date,
 O luckless Boy, and gain Delays from Fate? 1115
 Does Insolence and high Presumption reign
 In that vile Breast, because thy Foes disdain
 To take th' Advantage, and in Fight engage
 With one so far beneath a Soldier's Rage ;
 Hence to thy Equals, and, secure from Harms,
 At Home act o'er the Fray with mimic Arms: 1120
 There long enjoy, if War be thy Delight,
 The Pomp without the Dangers of the Fight,
 Or, if surviving Glory be thy Aim,
 We grant, at thy Request, a Death of Fame.
 Here on his Speech th' impatient Hero broke, 1125
 And thus in Terms of equal Wrath bespoke.
 Small as my Strength is, it avails to gain
 The Palm, and drive the *Thebans* from the Plain.
 Lives there so much a Boy, as to decline
 The Strife with you, a soft enervate Line? 1130
 In me, bold, rough and hardy, thou shalt find
 A Sample of the whole *Arcadian* Kind :
 Me no fair Priestess, by her God compres'd,
 Brought forth to Woe, in the still Hours of Rest,

v. 1131. *In me, bold, rough and hardy*] The latter Part of this Speech is very much like that of *Numanus* in the ninth Book of the *Æneid*.

— Natos ad flumina primum
 Deferimus, sævoque gelu duramus & undis.
 Venatu invigilant pueri, sylvasque fatigant :

And again ;

Vobis picta croco, & fulgenti murice vestis :
 Desidiæ cordi ; juvat indulgere choreis :
 Et tunicæ Manicas, & habent redimicula mitræ.

No Spears inverted in our Hands we bear, 1135
 Nor on our Heads unmanly Turbants wear,
 Train'd from our Birth, to dare the frozen Flood,
 Explore the savage Haunts, and range the Wood.
 To close the whole — (for why should I delay
 With needless Words the Business of the Fray?) 1140
 Our Mothers wield the Bow — your slothful Sires
 Strike hollow Timbrels, and attend the Quires,
 These Taunts, tho' just, *Amphion* could not hear,
 But at the Speaker's Mouth directs a Spear
 Of dreadful Size. — Astonish'd at the Glare, 1145
 The Courser rears aloft his Feet in Air,
 And, flound'ring, on one Side his Master cast,
 Then fell himself: the devious Javelin past.
 More fierce at this, the Foe unsheathe'd his Blade,
 And rush'd tumultuous: *Cynthia* this survey'd, 1150
 And, anxious for his Safety, interpos'd,
 Her Look disguis'd, and Features undisclos'd.
 Fir'd with chaste Love, and Friendship's holy Flame,
 Beside him *Dorceus* stood, and shar'd his Fame:
 To him the Queen consign'd his tender Years, 1155
 And youthful Wars, the Source of all his Fears.
 In his resembled Form, and borrow'd Vest
 The Goddess thus her favour'd Youth address'd.
 No more, O Prince! Here let thy Fury cease.
 Enough is giv'n to Vengeance, Fame and *Greece*. 1160
 Now spare the wretched *Atalanta*, spare
 Those Guardian-Gods, who make thy Life their Care.

v. 1153. *Fir'd with chaste Love*] Statius seems to have endeavoured by this Distinction to prevent any Suspicions of his Immorality, which *Virgil* lay under from having mentioned in different Parts of his Works the Love of Boys, and young Men with some Degree of Warmth.

The Youth replies: — Indulge this once thy Friend,
And wait, till on the Ground my Spear extend
This daring Wretch, who equal Weapons bears, 1165
Boasts equal Reins, and equal Vestments wears.

His Reins shall grace my Steed, his Vests the Door
Of *Dian*'s Temple, and his feather'd Store
My Mother's Quiver. — Weeping *Cynthia* hears
Th' insulting Vaunt, and smiles amidst her Tears. 1170
This from a distant Quarter of the Skies,
Couch'd in th' Embrace of *Mars*, fair *Venus* eyes,
And while she sues, recalling to his Mind
Harmonia, and her Offspring left behind,
By timely Arts awakes the Grief, supprest 1175
In the Recesses of his gloomy Breast.

Behold, O God of Arms, yon wanton Dame
With Mortals mixing in the Field of Fame!
How boldly she confines the War's Alarms,
And fixes, where she lists, the Stress of Arms. 1180
Yet more — she rages not alike on all;
Gall'd by her Darts, the Thebans only fall.

The Charge and Sway of Fight to her transferr'd,
'Tis thine with Darts to pierce the tim'rous Herd.
Fir'd by these just Complaints, the Warrior-God 1185
Sprung from her Arms, and to the Combat strode:

v. 1171. *This from a distant Quarter of the Skies*] *Venus* here, as well as in the *Aeneid*, takes Advantage of the amorous Fits of her Gallants, to win them over to her Purpose. And exclusive of her Charms, this Speech is very well calculated to procure her what she wanted. Nothing could prevail more with *Mars* than the apprehension of an Encroachment upon his Prerogative: and these two Lines in particular are very humorous and witty.

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His other Furies toiling at the Fray,
 Anger alone attends him in the Way.
 He checks the Goddess in her rapid Course,
 And from the Fight deters with menac'd Force. 1190
 The Fates to *Cynthia* diff'rent Wars decree;
 The Field of Battel is no Sphere for thee:
 Then quit it, or by *Styx* thou soon shalt know,
 Not *Pallas* 'self is a more dreadful Foe.
 What can she do? — Here threat'ning *Mars* withstands,
 There Fate, a loaded Distaff in her Hands;
 While *Jove* leans from the Stars, all stern to view.
 Through *Rev'rence* then the bashful Pow'r withdrew.
 Now thro' the *Theban* Lines *Mars* darts his Eyes,
 And *Dryas*, sprung from great *Orion*, spies; 1200
 Him, for his Hatred to the *Sylvan* Dame,
 He singles out, and sets his Soul on Flame.
 More furious now against the Race abhor'd,
 He slays th' *Arcadians*, and disarms their Lord.
Cyllene's Bands, and *Tegea*'s hardy Swains 1205
 In long Rows slaughter'd, press the sanguine Plains,
 Th' *Ægyptian* Chiefs, and Troops of *Pheneum* fly:
 Man falls on Man, and all or yield or die.
 Th' *Arcadian* Prince himself he next pursues
 With Hopes of Vengeance, though his Hands refuse
 To toss the Lance. — He wheeling, shifts his Course,
 And dreads the Giant-Chiefs superior Force.
 Presages dire the lab'ring Chief oppresses,
 Unman his Soul, and heighten his Distress.

v. 1200. *Sprung from great Orion*] *Orion* was stung to Death by a Scorpion on *Diana*'s Account. It was therefore very judicious in the Poet to make *Dryas* his Son.

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And

And now the real *Dorceus* he descry'd
Sorrowing: a faithful few remain'd beside. 1215
His Strength recedes, and, as the Quiver grew
More light, his Want of Shafts he quickly knew.
Less easy now the Weight of Arms he bears,
And to himself a Boy at length appears: 1220
But, when he view'd the hostile Buckler's Flame,
A sudden Tremour shot through all his Frame.
As when a Swan surveys the Bird of *Jove*,
For Prey descending from his Walks above,
She seeks some Cavern, and with Fear deprest, 1225
Claps close her quiv'ring Pinions to her Breast.
Thus when *Parthenopaeus* near discerns
His Foe's Gigantic Size, his Anger turns
To deathful Horror: yet he still relies
On Arms, and fixing on the Heav'ns his Eyes, 1230
Invokes his Patroness, and aims a Blow,
The forked Weapon fitted to the Bow.
Now with full Force he bends the stubborn Yew,
The String approach'd his Breast, so close he drew,

v. 1223. *As when a Swan surveys the Bird of Jove]* This similitude is very expressive of the Terror and Consternation of *Parthenopaeus*. Homer in the 21st of his Iliad has one something like it, where he compares *Diana*, afraid of *Juno*, to a Dove afraid of a Falcon.

Δακρυόεσσα δ' ἵπειται θεὰ Φύγεν ὡς τέλεια,
"Ηρα δ' ὅπ' ἵρης κοίλην εἰσέπεπτο πέτρην
Χηρεμόν, οὐδ' ἔρει τῆγε ἀλώρενας αἴσιμον ἥνε. v. 493.

v. 1233. *Now with full Force]* The Posture and Attitude of the Shooter are painted in a very lively and beautiful Manner. *Dryas* pierces his Enemy near the Articulation of the Arm and Shoulder, so that the former loses all it's strength.—This is a just Representation of the Consequence of such a Wound, and I believe, every one will readily allow this Passage to be a speaking Picture.

And

And the far distant Horns already join'd, 1235
Drawn to an Arch: when swifter than the Wind,
Th' *Aonian* Javelin obvious flies, and broke
The sounding String: his Arm beneath the Stroke
Is numb'd, and guiltless of th' intended Wound,
The Bow unbent, the Shaft drops on the Ground, 1240
At length, in Height of agonizing Pain,
He quits the Reins, and Weapons, grasp'd in vain,
(For through his Mail the Spear had wing'd it's
Flight,
Just where the Shoulder and the Arm unite)
When lo! a second Lance, impell'd with Force, 1245
Transpierc'd the Courser's Knee, and stops his
Course.

Then haughty *Dryas* (wonderful to tell!)
Unconscious of the Hand, by which he fell,
Himself was slain: Nor was the Weapon found,
And daring Author of so great a Wound. 1250
But his sad Comrades on an ample Shield
Remove the youthful Hero from the Field,
Who grieves not for himself, but for his Steed:
O early Age for such a glorious Deed! 1254
His beauteous Face grows wan, his Helm unty'd,
And on his trembling Cheeks the Graces died.
Thrice did they raise his Head, and thrice depress'd,
His Neck reclines upon his snowy Breast;
Down which (Oh! ruthless Vengeance of his Foes!)
The gushing Blood in purple Currents flows. 1260
To *Dorceus* now he gave his dying Hand,
And sighing, thus address'd his last Command.

Life ebbs apace : but thou with lenient Art
 Some Solace to my Mother's Grief impart :
 She in terrific Visions of the Night, 1265
 In Dreams, or in some Bird's ill-omen'd flight,
 Has seen my Doom.—Yet study some Pretence,
 Some pious Frauds to keep her in Suspence.
 Nor break it suddenly, nor when she stands,
 The Chace just o'er, with Weapons in her Hands. 1270
 But these my Words repeat, when forc'd to tell :
 "O Mother, thro' my own Deserts I fell,
 " As in Contempt of thee, I sought the Plain,
 " Thy Pray'rs rejected, thy Dissuasions vain :
 " And, heedless of thy Counsels, still engag'd, 1275
 " Where Glory call'd, and where the Combate rag'd.
 " Live therefore, and thy fruitless Grief resign'd,
 " Resent, not pity, my too froward Mind.
 " In vain from fam'd *Lycæus*' snow-capt Brow,
 " Thou lookest, anxious, on the Plain below, 1280
 " If chance some shout reecchoes in the Skies,
 " And Clouds of Dust beneath our Feet arise.
 " I press a foreign Strand, nor art thou nigh
 " To catch my parting Breath, and close my Eye.
 " Yet, honour'd Parent, for the Giver's Sake, 1285
 " This Lock, in Lieu of the whole Body, take,

v. 1263. *Life ebbs apace*] The Beginning of this Speech cannot be too much commended for the filial Piety and Affection it displays, and the Simplicity of the latter Part is not disgusting as it comes from the Mouth of so young a Person as *Parthenopæus*, and here I cannot help observing, that the Combate of *Hippomedon* with *Ismenos* is a sublime Piece of Machinery, and the Description of the Exploits and Death of *Parthenopæus* equally tender and affecting. In short there is no Part of the *Thebaid*, that has more Force of Imagination, and a greater Exertion of the inventive Faculties of our Author.

This

“ This thou wast wont to deck, in my Despight,
“ And make the tender Office thy Delight.
“ To this funereal Rites thou shalt assign ;
“ And Oh remember, what I now injoin : 1290
“ My sylvan Weapons grant to no Demands,
“ Lest they grow blunt in unexperienc'd Hands :
“ Let my lov'd Hounds enjoy Repose, nor own
“ Another Lord, and feed from Hands unknown :
“ But burn these useless Arms on yonder Plain, 1295
“ Or hang them up in cruel *Cynthia's* Fane.

TH

THE

THE BAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE TENTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THIS Book opens with an Harangue of Eteocles to his Soldiers, in which he advises them to attack the Grecians' Camp by Night. The Ladies of Argos go in Procession to Juno's Temple, and implore the Blessing of that Goddess upon the Arms of the Allies. She sends Iris to Somnus, to persuade him to set the Thebans in a deep Sleep. This being done, Thiodamas influences the Troops to sally forth, and massacre the Thebans in their Intrenchments. A select party is order'd to accompany him by Adraustus. They make a great Slaughter, and Morning drawing near, devote the Trophies to Apollo, and then retire. Hopleus and Dymas go in quest of the Bodies of Tydeus and Parthenopæus, but are intercepted by Amphion and slain. A party of the Enemy rush into Thebes, and fall victims to their own Rashness. The Citizens in great Consternation at this Irruption, apply to Tiresias, who informs them, that they can only be saved by the voluntary Death of Menoceus. That Hero, touch'd with Compassion for his Country, first stabs himself, and then leaps off the Tower upon his Enemies. In the mean Time Capaneus exerts himself in a very extraordinary Manner, and having scaled the Walls of Thebes, is struck down and killed by Jupiter with Lightning for his Impiety.

THE
THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE TENTH.

SOL's Evening Wheels o'erhung th' Hesperian Strand,
And dewy night advanc'd at Jove's Command,
Who from Olympus with unpitying Eyes
The Rage and Slaughter of the Fight descries;
Yet grieves, so many alien Troops shou'd fall
By Fates unjust before the Theban Wall. 5
The Plain unfolds a Scene of Horror. — Here
Confus'dly heap'd, Cars, Horses, Arms appear,
Dismember'd Heroes, Hearts that beat no more
To Glory's Call, and Trunks disguis'd with Gore. 10

v. 1. *Sol's Ev'ning Wheels o'erbung*] As in every just History-Picture (to use the Allusion of Mr Pope) there is one principal Figure, to which all the rest refer and are subfervient; so in each Battel of the *Thebaid* there is one principal Person, that may properly be called the Hero of that Day and Action. This Conduct preserves the Unity of the Piece, and keeps the Imagination from being distract- ed and confused with a wild Number of independent Figures, which have no Subordination to each other. In this Particular *Sta- tius* has followed the Example of *Homer*, as the Reader must have observed. In the seventh Book *Amphiaraus* is the leading Character, in the eighth *Tydeus*, in the ninth *Hippomedon*, in the eleventh *Poly- nices*; and in this, *Capuneus*, whose Death and Exploits with the Description of the Palace of Sleep render this Book equal, if not superiour to any of the preceding.

Then

Then the dishonour'd Host, their Ensigns torn,
 Withdraw their Bands, with Length of Combate worn:
 The Gates, unclos'd, admit the lessen'd Train
 With half the Ease, they sent them to the Plain.
 They grieve, yet find some Solace to their Griefs, 15
 As four, the bravest of the *Grecian* Chiefs
 Were slain.—Their Legions roam without a Guide,
 Like Vessels tost on Ocean's billowy Tide,
 Whose Course un-steer'd the Winds and Tempests sway,
 And Chance conducts them o'er the watry Way. 20
 From this alone the *Tyrians* bolder grown,
 No longer fear the Capture of the Town,
 But hoping Conquest, study to prevent
 The Foe's Escape, shou'd that be their Intent. 24
 The Watch-word flies through all th' assembled Host;
 The Guards, by Turns dispos'd, maintain their Post.
 By Lot to *Meges*, and to *Lycus* falls
 The Post of Honour.—Now beneath the Walls
 At their Command Arms, Food and Fire they bring,
 Harangu'd, as follows, by the joyful King. 30
 Assume, ye Vanquishers of *Grecce*, ye Rods
 To scourge the Foes of *Thebes* and of the Gods,
 Fresh Courage, and your ravish'd Fame retrieve;
 Nor at this Interval of Darknes grieve,
 Which bounds our Ire: we'll finish what's begun 35
 Befere the setting of To-morrow's Sun.
 See *Lerna*'s Glory humbled in the Dust,
 The Chiefs, in whom she most repos'd her Trust!
 By vengeful Heav'n her boasted *Tydeus* fell; 39
 The Seer's black Shade surpriz'd the Pow'rs of Hell.
 With stern *Hippomedon*'s triumphal Spoils
Ismenos swells, nor midst our warlike Toils

Rank we th' Arcadian's Death.—The Premium lies
In our own Breasts, and Plunder is our Prize.
No more, each at his Cohort's Van, appear 45
The sev'n fam'd Crests, or glitter in the Rear.
Then fear ye Capaneus, whose Valour's Rage,
My Brother's Youth, and th' Argive Monarch's Age?
Haste, Warriors, haste, and while intrench'd they lie,
Surround with Flames, nor give them time to fly. 50
Within our Reach the glorious Conquest stands,
And the rich Prey lies ready to our Hands.
The *Thebans* thus he fires with promis'd Spoils,
And urges to renew their prosp'rous Toils.
They turn'd just as they were, nor wash'd away 55
The Sweat and Blood of the preceding Day:
Their dearest Friends from their Embrace they shook,
No Pause they make, and no Enquiries brook.
The Troops in sev'ral Parties then divide,
And gird the Front, the Back, and either Side 60
Of the Greek Trench with Flames.—At Depth of Night
Thus rav'ning Wolves in hideous Throngs unite,

v. 61. *At Depth of Night*] Virgil has an equally fine Simile in his ninth Book, derived from the same Animal.

Ac veluti pleno Lupus insidiatus ovili,
Cum fremit ad caulas, ventos perpeffus, & imbræ,
Nocte super mediâ: tuni sub matribus agni
Balatum exercent: ille asper, & improbus irâ,
Sævit in absentes: collecta fatigat edendi
Ex longo rabies, & siccæ sanguine fauces.

Tasso has transcribed the first Part of this Comparison in the nineteen Canto of his Jerusalem;

Qual lupo predatore al'aer bruno
Le chiuse mandre, insidiando, aggira,
Secco l'avide fauci, e nel digiuno
Da nativo odio stimolato, e d'ira.

G g

And

And, urg'd with Lust of long-untasted Food,
Desert their Haunts, and seek the fleecy Brood.
Vain Hope torments their Maws, as in the Gale 65
They snuff their Breath, and list'ning at the Pale,
Catch their hoarse Bleatings. Stiff at length with Cold,
In Impotence of Anger, at the Fold
They dart their Claws, and while the Foam runs o'er,
Gnash their sharp Teeth, and threat th'obstructing Door.
Meanwhile at Argos an assembled Train 71
Of suppliant Dames proceed to Juno's Fane:
There, prostrate at her Altars, they implore
Her Aid divine, and urge her to restore

v. 71. *Meanwhile at Argos an assembled Train*] This Procession of the Grecian Matrons to the Temple of Juno, with their Offerings, and the Ceremonies is copied from the sixth Book of the Iliad, where the Trojan Women make the same Procession to Minerva's Temple.

Αὶ δὲ γῆς ἵκανον Ἀθήνης σὺν πόλει ἄκρη,
Τῆς θύρας ἀνέ Θεαντὸν κατέπιπρηθε,
Αὶ δὲ ὀλονυμῆ πᾶσαν Ἀθήνη χειρας αὐτέρχον
Ἡδὲ ἄρα πέπλον ἐλέσαν θεαντὸν κατέπιπρηθε.
Θῆκεν Ἀθηναῖς ἐπὶ γενναῖσιν ἡγιόμοιο.

Virgil has also introduced it among the Figures in the Picture at Carthage. *Aeneid. i. v. 483.*

Interea ad templum non æquæ Palladis ibant
Crinibus Iliades passis, peplumque ferebant
Suppliciter tristes; & tunsis pectora palmis.

He has copied it again in the eleventh Book;

Necnon ad templum summasque ad Palladis arces
Subvenitur magnâ matrum regina catervâ,
Dona ferens:
Succedunt matres, & templum thure vaporant,
Et mœstas alto fundunt de Limine voces.

But I think, our Author's is more conformable to the Christian System; the Worship whereof is grounded more on Love than Fear, and seems directed rather to implore the Assistance and Protection of a benevolent Being, than avert the Malice and Anger of a wrathful and mischievous Daemon.

Their

Their absent Friends. On the cold Stones they fall, 75

They press their Faces to the Doors and Wall,

And teach their little Sons Religion's Care.

Now sets the Day, consum'd in Vows and Pray'r,

And Night succeeds, when heap'd with watchful Fires,
Their Altars blaze: the Smoke ascends in Spires. 80

A costly Veil too, as a Gift, they brought,

No barren Hand the shining Vest had wrought;

Rich was it's Texture, and it's every Part

Was labour'd o'er with more than vulgar Art.

The Ground was purple, glorious to behold, 85

With Foliage interwove, and Flow'rs of Gold.

There Juno's self with Eyes cast downward stands,

Betroth'd, not fetter'd yet in nuptial Bands;

Asham'd to sink the Sister in the Spouse,

Her rosy Cheek with graceful Blushes glows, 90

And, yet a Stranger to his furtive Love,

She prints sweet Kisses on her youthful Jove.

With this the sacred Iv'ry they invest,

And weeping, thus their humble Suit address,

O Queen of Heav'n, and all th' ethereal Pow'rs! 95

Behold the *Tyrian* Harlot's impious Tow'rs!

Burst all her Gates, hurl all her Rampions down,

And with new Light'nings blast the guilty Town.

How can she act? — She knows the Will of Fate,

And fears with *Jove* to enter in Debate;

100

Yet sorrows, lest the Gifts of mighty Cost,

Their ardent Pray'rs, and Sacrifice be lost.

While thus she mus'd, auspicious Chance bestows

A Time to aid, and grant their pious Vows.

From her bright Throne she sees the Portals clos'd,

And wakeful Guards around the Trench dispos'd. 105

Wrath and Revenge her spleenful Bosom strook,
 And as she mov'd, her Crown terrific shook.
 Such was her Rage, when from her starry Plain
 She view'd *Alcmene*'s Son with stern Disdain, 110
 And griev'd, that *Thebes* shou'd bring *two Bastard-Boys
 To Light, the Fruits of *Jove*'s adult'rous Joys.
 She dooms the *Thebans* then to Death, who keep
 The mighty Watch, when lock'd in sudden Sleep:
 In *Iris* now she vests the whole Command, 115
 And lodges all the weighty Charge in Hand,
 Who bends her Progress to the World below,
 Suspending high in Air her various Bow.
 Far on the Confines of the western Main,
 Where *Æthiopia* bounds her wide Domain, 120

* *Hercules* and *Bacchus*, the former being the Son of *Alcmene*,
 and the latter of *Semele*.

v. 119. *Far on the Confines*] The Poets have differed in their Accounts of the Situation of this Court of *Morpheus*: *Homer* places it at *Lemnos*, *Ovid* with the *Cimmerians*, a People of *Scythia*, and ours above *Æthiopia*. The Verses marked are some that are not in all the Editions, but which I have rendered on the Authority of *Gronovius*. This Description is preferable to that of the Temple of *Mars* in the seventh Book, but rivalled by that of the Palace of this Deity in the 11th Book of the *Metamorphoses*.

Est prope *Cimmerios* longo Spelunca recessu,
 Mons cavus, ignavi domus, et penetralia Somni;
 Quo nunquam radiis oriens, mediusve, cadensve
 Phœbus adire potest. Nebulæ caligine mistæ
 Exhalantur humo: dubiæque crepuscula lucis.
 Non vigil ales ibi cristi cantibus oris
 Evocat Auroram: nec voce silentia rumpunt
 Sollicitive canes, canibusve sagacior anser.
 Non fera, non pecudes, non moti flumine rami,
 Humanæve sonum reddunt convicia linguae
 Muta quies habitat. Saxo tamen exit ab imo
 Rivus aquæ Lethes: per quem olim murmure labens
 Invitat somnos crepitantibus unda lapillis.
 Ante fores antri fæcunda papavera florent,
 Innumeræque herbæ, quarum de lacte soporem

Nox

There stands a Grove, that casts a Shade afar,
 Impenetrable to the brightest Star,
 Beneath whose hollow Rocks a Cave descends
 Of depth immense, and in the Mountain ends.
 Here all-disposing Nature fix'd th' Abode 125
 Of *Somnus*, and secur'd the drowsy God.
 Sloth, who scarce knows an Interval from Sleep,
 Rest motion-less, and dark Oblivion keep
 Eternal Sentry at the gloomy Gate:
 There listless Ease, and awful Silence fate 130
 With close-contracted Wings, and, still as Death,
 Repell the Winds, and hush each Murmur's Breath
 No rustling Foliage here is heard to move,
 No feather'd Songsters warble thro' the Grove;
 No Lightnings glare, no crashing Thunders roar, 135
 No foamy Waves, rebounding from the Shore.
 The neighb'ring Stream along the Valley glides,
 And rolls between the Rocks his noiseless Tides.
 The sable Herds and Flocks from Food abstain,
 Or only graze, recumbent on the Plain: 140

Nox legit, et spargit per opacas humida terras.
 Janua, quæ verso stridorem cardine reddat,
 Nulla domo toto est; custos in limine nullus.
 At medio torus est, ebeno sublimis in atra,
 Plumeus, unicolor, pullo velamine tectus:
 Quo cubat ipse Deus, membris languore solutis.
 Hunc circa passim varias imitantia formas
 Somnia vana jacent totidem, quot messis aristas,
 Silva gerit frondes, ejectas littus arenas.

I think the *Ovidian* Circumstance of its having no Gates, which might make a Noise by the Turning of their Hinges, is proper enough: but our Author's Account of the greatest Provocatives to Sleep is very just, and a great Improvement on the preceding Description.

470 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book X.

Nor stops th' Infection here, but spreads around,
And withers Herbs just springing from the Ground.
" Within a thousand Statues of the God
" Were grav'd by *Vulcan*. — Here was seen to nod
" Pleasure, with over-acted Joys oppres'd, 145
" And healthful Toil, ne'er physick'd into Rest,
" There Love from am'rous Cares a Respite stole,
" And *Bacchus* snor'd o'er a half-finish'd Bowl.
" Deep, deep within Death, his Half-Brother, lies,
" His Face was void of Terror, clos'd his Eyes. 150
Beneath the Dew-bespangled Cavern lay
The God himself, and doz'd his Cares away.
The Roof was verdant; his own Poppies spread
A Carpet soft, and swell'd the rising Bed.
His Mouth, half-shut, breaths soporific Steams, 155
And his warm Vests exhale the vap'ry Streams.
One Hand sustains 'his Head; the Horn drops down,
Unheeded, from his other torpid grown.
A thousand various Dreams attend their Chief,
Truths mix'd with Falshood, Joys alloy'd with Grief:
The Sons of Darkness these, and Night's black Hosts,
On Earth they lie, or cleave to Beams and Posts.
Some slender Glimm'rings faintly shine between,
And serve to make the Gloom more clearly seen.
Here, pois'd on equal Pinions, *Iris* flies, 165
And draws a thousand Colours from the Skies.
At her approach the Woods, the Vales below
Smile, and reflect the Radiance of her Bow:
While the dark Dome, struck by her glitt'ring Zone,
Bursts into Light, and Splendors not it's own. 170
Still Proof against th' irradiating Gleams,
And heav'nly Voice, the sluggish Godhead dreams,

Till

Till with fresh Light she strengthen'd ev'ry Ray,
 And in his Eyes infus'd the golden Day:
 Then scarce awake, and half unclos'd his Eyes, 175
 He lifts his Head. — The show'ry Goddess cries.
 O *Somnus*, gentlest of the Pow'rs above,
 At *Juno*'s Suit, the Sister-Queen of *Jove*,
 On *Thebes* thy soporific Arts employ,
 Who, flush'd with Conquest and unruly Joy, 180
 The *Grecian* Trench beleaguer.— Disobey
 Thy just Commands, and Night's alternate Sway.
 Grant her Request then, snatch the Time to please
 That rarely comes, and wrathful *Jove* appease
 By means of *Juno*'s interceding Aid. — 185
 This Mandate giv'n, the many-colour'd Maid
 Ceas'd not, but lest she give her Charge in vain,
 Thrice shook him, and repeats it o'er again.
 Thus importun'd the Pow'r of Slumbers nods
 Assent. The fair attendant of the Gods, 190
 Clog'd with thick Vapors, quits the dark Domain,
 And points her Rays, grown blunt with frequent Rain.
 He too call'd forth his Speed, and active Pow'rs,
 With blust'ring Winds disturb'd the peaceful Hours,
 And spreads his Mantle out, contracted, bent, 195
 And stiffen'd with the freezing Element;

v. 184. *And wrathful Jove appease]* We know not, in what *Somnus* offended *Jupiter*, unless it was in setting him to sleep, in order that *Juno* might shipwreck *Hercules* in his Voyage home from *Troy*, as he himself tells that Goddess in the 14th Book of the *Iliad*.

"Ητοι ἐγὼ μὲν ἐθελέω Διὸς νόον αἰγάλοχοι
 Νιόδυμος ἀμφιχυθείσ. Σὺ δέ οι κακοὶ μόσχος Θυμῷ,
 "Ορσασ' αργαλέων ἀνέμων ἐπὶ πόντον ἀγάτας.
 Καὶ μιν ἐπειτα Κώνι δεῦ ναιομένην ἀπίνεικας
 Νοσφὶ φίλων πάσιτων. ο δ' ἐπεγρόμενος γαλέπαντα.

Then,

Then, bending thro' the Skies his silent Flight,
O'erhangs the *Tyrian* Plains from Heav'n's mid-height.

His Breath alone extends upon the Ground
Herds, Flocks and Birds, and stills the World around,
Where'er he takes his Way, the Billows slide 201
From off the Rocks, and howling Storms subside:
The Clouds condense, the Forests nod on high,
And falling Stars desert the drowsy Sky,
First sudden Mists, wide spreading o'er the Field, 205
The Presence of the Deity reveal'd,
Then strait the senseless Dins and Riot cease,
And the late noisy Camp is hush'd in Peace:
But, when he stretches out his humid Wings,
And, circumfus'd in pitchy Darkness, flings 210
His Poppies far and wide—They roll their Eyes,
And on the Tongue th' imperfect Accent dies,
Then from their op'ning Hands, disarm'd by Rest,
They drop their Shields and Spears: their Heads
deprest

With Weight unwonted on their Bosoms fall.— 215

And now the God of Silence reigns o'er all:
The Coursers sink to sleep at his Command,
And sudden Ashes quench'd each flaming Brand.
But the bland Pow'r of Night (as was injoin'd)
To *Thebes* alone his opiate Gifts confin'd; 220
From the confed'rate Camps he drives away
His Mists: — awake, as in the Blaze of Day.
They stand in Arms, and fir'd with just Disdain,
Expect the menac'd Fray, and hostile Train,

Lo!

Lo! chilling Horror creeps thro' all the Breast 225
 Of their sage Prophet, by the God possest,
 And urges him tumultuous to disclose
 The Fates' Designs upon his Country's Foes.
 Whether this Insight *Phæbus* had inspir'd,
 Or *Juno* with prophetic Fury fir'd, 230
 Dreadful in Voice and Look, he springs abroad,
 By Heav'n's informing Spirit over-aw'd,

v. 225. *Lo! chilling Horror*] Compare this with the following
 Passages of *Virgil* and *Tryphiodorus*.

Ventum erat ad limen, cum Virgo: "Poscere fata
 "Tempus, ait: Deus, ecce Deus." Cui talia fanti
 Ante Fores, subito non vultus, non color unus,
 Non comptæ mansere comæ: sed pectus anhelum,
 Et rabie fera corda tument, majorque videri,
 Nec mortale sonans: afflata est numine quando
 Tam propiore Dei. —— *Æn.* 6.

Καρη δ' εἰς θαλαμοῖο θειλαχθεῖσης μημεν
 Ηθελεν ἐνθαλαμοῖσι. Αὔρρηξασ πόχηας,
 Εδραμεν —————
 Τοιη μαντικολοιο βολης ψπὸ τυγματικηρι
 Πλαζομενη κραδιην ιερην αὔνεσειστο διφυη.
 Πανη δε βρυχατο καπη τολοιν. —————
 Οὐκ ετω Θρησκαι εἰς δευμοιοτ γυναικα.
 Νηδυμθε αὐλὸς ετυψεν ορεμαγεθε Διογυσ,
 Ητε θεω τυφεισισ ταρπορον ομηρ τιτανει,
 Γυμιον επι σεισοι κρηη κυαναιπτυκι κιοι.
 "Τι πηε τλεοφονιος αναιξασ ποσιο
 Κασανδρη γεοφονιθε ἐμαινετο' πουκνα δε καιτη
 Κοπλομενη η τερον, ανιαχθε μαιναδι φανη.

Destruction of *Troy*.

There is one Circumstance of Similitude between the Descriptions of *Tryphiodorus* and *Statius*, that makes me think one of them borrowed from the other; and that is the Likeness of the Comparison: For as the Phrenzy of *Thiodamas* is compared to that of one of *Cybele's* Priests, so the Fury of *Cassandra* is illustrated by that of a *Thracian Bacchanal*. But who is the Original in this Case cannot be known, till the Time, in which *Tryphiodorus* flourished is ascertained, which Mr. *Merrick*, his Translator, assures us is not yet done.

And

And foams and quakes, unable to controul
 The lab'ring Impulse of his master'd Soul.
 His haggard Face with Heat unwonted glows, 235
 And by quick Turns his Colour comes and goes :
 He rolls his Eyes around ; his Locks, that flow
 Disorder'd, shake the Chaplet on his Brow.
 At Periods thus the *Pbrygian* Zealot raves,
 Whom *Cybele* from his terrific Caves, 240
 Or Shrines allures, nor tho' he bleeds, he knows
 His Arms are hack'd and seam'd with frequent Blows.
 He plies the holy Pine, and whirls around
 His Hair : the Motion deadens ev'ry Wound.
 The Field, and gory Tree are seiz'd with Fear, 245
 And the scar'd Lions high her Chariot rear.
 Now to the Council-Hall, and awful Dome
 With Standards hung, the madding Seer had come :
Adraſtus here presides o'er the Debate,
 And plans the Welfare of th' indanger'd State : 250
 The Peers of *Argos* stand, and form a Ring
 About the Throne of their consulting King,
 Advanc'd by the late Deaths, nor do they thank
 The cruel Stroke, that elevates their Rank.
 As when a Vessel has her Pilot lost 255
 In a mid-voyage, half the Ocean croſſ'd,
 One, who with Skill the Prow or Side-Decks guides,
 Succeeds, and at the widow'd Helm presides ;
 Th' astonish'd Ship then wonders as she goes,
 With equal Speed, and equal Steerage knows. 260
 Thus to the *Greeks* the sprightly Seer imparts
 Fresh Spirits, and re-fortifies their Hearts :
 Heav'n's Mandates, and Advice of high Import
 To you, renowned Chieftains, we report.

Think

Think not, these weighty Accents are my own; 265

A God inspires them, whose prophetic Crown,

Approv'd by your consenting Voice, I wear,

Nor in Despite of him, these Ensigns bear.

This Night, now big with many a daring Deed,
By Fate for glorious Treachery's decreed: 270

Lo! Honour calls, and Fortune asks your Hands
To act, and Hearts to dare, what she commands.

The *Thebans* sleep—Then let this Night repay
The deathful Feats, and Carnage of the Day.

To Arms, to Arms — this Hour shall make Amends
For all, and serve as Fun'rals to our Friends:

Burst we the Gates, shou'd they our Wrath oppose,
And turn the Tide of Vengeance on our Foes.

For by these Tripods, and th' untimely Fate
Of our late Augur, in the last Debate 280

This, warn'd by fav'ring Omens, I beheld,
What Time our Host, by hostile Force repell'd,
Forsook the Fight; but now the Pow'rs divine
Confirm, repeat, and clear the former Sign.

Beneath the Covert of the silent Night 285
The Seer himself stood manifest to Sight,

v. 269. *This Night, now big with many a*] This Machine is very beautiful; and indeed a Contrivance to repair the Acts of the last Day by this Night-Adventure was very necessary, as the *Greeks* were very much dispirited by the Death of the four Leaders. The Hint of it is taken from the 10th Book of the *Iliad*, where *Diomed* and *Ulysses* sally out upon the like Errand; or from the 9th of the *Aeneid*, where *Nisus* and *Euryalus* make an Expedition of this Kind, and give Rise to a noble Episode. And here I cannot but take Notice, how amiably *Adrastus* appears to us, who ever anxious for the Good of his People, keeps awake and calls a Council to settle the Means of their Preservation, in this Behaviour we may discover the Marks of an affectionate Father, a sincere Friend, a patriotic King, and a prudent General.

From

From Earth emerg'd ; such as alive he shone,
The Colour of his Steeds was chang'd alone.

I speak no Visions of the Night profound,
Nor Prodigies in Slumber only found.

Dost thou (he cry'd) permit the *Greeks* to lose
This fair Occasion, sure they can't refuse ?

Restore, degen'rate Chief, these Wreaths restore,
So ill-deserv'd, nor so disgrac'd before.

I taught thee not for this the Mysteries

Of Heav'n, or how to read each Wing, that flies.

But come at least—on *Thebes* revenge my Death,
And with thy Sword suppress their forfeit Breath.

He said, and urg'd me to the nightly War.

With his uplifted Spear, and all his Car.

Snatch then the Vengeance, which the Gods bestow ;

No more, Man clos'd with Man, we seek the Foe :

Fenceless they lie ; and we've full Pow'r to rage :

But who with me will in th' Emprise engage,

And, while the Fates permit, his Glory raise

On this firm Base, and win eternal Praise ?

Mark yon repeated Omens of the Night,

Auspicious Birds ! — I'll follow them to fight,

Tho' none shou'd second me : for lo ! again

He drives his ratling Chariot o'er the Plain.

v.308. *I'll follow them to fight*] This recalls to my Remembrance a similar Rant, which *Homer* puts into the Mouth of *Diomed*, tho' perhaps, with less propriety : as in him it was the Result of downright Rashness, but in our Augur, of an honest Confidence in the Deity.

Αλλοι μενέσοι πορηκομέσθιες Ἀχαιοί
Εισάκι περ Τροίην διεπέρσομδι, εἰ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ¹
Φελγόνιαν σὺν τηνοῖ φίλων ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.
Νῦν δὲ τούτων, Σφίνελός τε μαρχησόμεν² εισάκι τέκμανε
τλίς εὑραμεν. σὺν γάρ θεω εἰλέσθημεν. Iliad. B. 9. v. 45.

Thus

Thus with exalted Voice the Chief exclaims
 Piercing the Night's dull Ear, and all inflames ;
 As by one Pow'r inspir'd, with him they join,
 Resolv'd to share, whate'er the Fates design.
 Full thirty Warriors, at the King's Command, 315
 He singles out, the Flow'r of all the Band :
 But Envy swell'd each other *Argive's* Breast,
 Eager of Action, Enemy to Rest ;
 Some deem their Race a Merit, and make known
 Their Grandfire's Actions, others boast their own, 320
 Or will, that Lots be cast.—This seen, the King
 Exults, buoy'd up on Hope's aspiring Wing,
 On *Pholoë* thus the Rearer of the Steed,
 When the kind Spring renew's his gen'rous Breed,
 With Joy views these strain up the Mountain-Steep,
 Those with their Dams contend, or dare the Deep :
 Then much he muses, which are fit to train
 For rural Labours, or th' embattled Plain,
 Which best would serve the Chace, or soonest rise
 To Palms *Elean*, and th' Olympic Prize ? 330
 Such honest Glee the hoary Monarch shows,
 Nor checks their Ardors, nor less eager glows.
 What Gods (he cries) so sudden, yet so late
 Thus interpose to save th' afflicted State ?

v. 323. *On Pholoë thus*] Homer illustrates the Joy, which *Aeneas* displays on viewing the Discipline and Valour of his Troops by that of a Shepherd, on seeing his Flocks in good Plight, as he leads them to Water.

Αὐτὰρ επειπτε
 Λαοὶ επαύθ, ιογει τε μετακτίλον ἐσθετο μηλος
 Πιορευ' σα βοτανης, γανταν δισρε τε φρενος ποιμίω.
 Ως Αιγειας θυμος ενί σθιδεσι γανθεται,
 Ως ιδε λαονι εγνας εν απομενον τοι αύτω.

Are

Are these the Seeds of Courage, that withstood 335
 Distress so long, the Ebb of gen'rous Blood?
 Illustrious Youths, I praise you, and enjoy
 Sedition, rais'd thro' Ardor to destroy :
 But, as we meditate a fraudulent Blow,
 Our Motions must be private, lest tney know. 340
 A noisy Crowd ill suits with dark Designs,
 Restrain your Rage, till *Sol* returning shines,
 Then we'll all sally out, to War releas'd.—
 Sooth'd by these Words, their youthful Fury ceas'd.
 As when stern *Aeolus* rolls the huge Stone 345
 Before his Cave, and from his airy Throne
 Confines the Winds, all eager to engage,
 And pour upon the Deep their blust'ring Rage.
 The Seer *Agylleus* to the Task assign'd.
 And *Aetor*.—This was skill'd to sway the Mind 350
 With bland Persuasion ; that, *Alcides'* Son,
 Boasts equal Strength, and equal Trophies won.
 Beneath each Chief ten Warriors take their Way ;
 Which might alone the *Theban* Host affray
 In open Fight.—The Seer himself lays down 355
 The Ensigns of his God, the Laurel-Crown,
 And Fillet, that confines his flowing Hair,
 Commended to the aged Monarch's Care :
 In *Polynices'* Mail his Breast he cas'd,
 And on his Head the proffer'd Helmet lac'd. 360
 Stern *Capaneus* a Sword to *Aetor* gave,
 For he himself, immoderately brave,

v. 361. *Stern Capaneus a Sword to Aetor*] That it was a Custom among the Ancients to make Presents of this Kind to Adventurers, before they set out on an Expedition, is evident from *Homer's Iliad*, Book the 10th, v. 255.

Disdains Heav'n's Guidance, and the Night's Alarms.
 With *Nomius* then *Agylleus* changes Arms ;
 For little would avail the Archer now, 365
 The Shafts *Herculean*, and unerring Bow.
 Thus, sheath'd in radiant Arms, they quit their Tents,
 And, headlong, from the steepy Battlements
 Leap down, lest, shou'd they thro' the Portals take
 Their Way, the brazen Hinge the *Thebans* wake. 370
 Stretch'd on the Ground, they view the ready Prey :
 As slain already, motionless they lay.
 Wheree'er you list, my brave Companions, go,
 And hew a Passage thro' the sleeping Foe,
 (With Voice distinct, the Priest exhorting cry'd) 375
 Nor spare the Blessing, which the Gods provide.
 You see the Foe expos'd upon the Plain :
 Did these ? I speak with Anger and Disdain)
 Did these coop up our Warriors in their Wall,
 Blind to their Int'rest, deaf to Glory's Call ? 380

Τυδεῖδη μὲν δῶκε μρυπλόλεμος Θεοσυμῆδος
 Φάργανον ἄμφηκες [τὸ τ' ἐὸν στρεψά οὐνοὶ λέλειπο]
 Καὶ σάκος ἀμφὶ δὲ οἱ κινέισι κεφαλῆφιν ἔθηκε
 Ταυρέισι, ἀφελόντε, καὶ ἄλοφον, ἥτε πατάσιν
 Κέκληται. 'Ρύεται ἡ κύρη θαλερῶν αἰζηνόν.
 Μηρόντης δὲ Οδυσσῆι σίδης βίδην, ἥδε φαρέτεισι,
 Καὶ ζίφος. ἀμφὶ δὲ οἱ κινέισι κεφαλῆφιν ἔθηκε
 'Ρινῆς ποιητήν. —————

And from *Virgil's Aeneid*, Book the 9th, Line 303.

Sic ait illacrymans : humero simul exuit ensim
 Auratum, mira quem fecerat arte Lycaon
 Gnoſſius atque habilem vaginā aptarat eburnā.
 Dat Niso Mnestheus pellem, horrentisque Leonis
 Exuvias : galeam fidus permuat Alethes.

The holy Scriptures likewise make mention of a similar Gift : *Samuel*, Book 1st, Chap. 18. ver. 4. " And *Jonathan* stript himself of " the Robe, that was upon him, and gave it to *David*, and his " Garments even to his Sword, and to his Bow, and to his Girdle.

This

This said, in Wrath he drew his glitt'ring Brand,
 And pass'd the dying Troops with rapid Hand.
 Who can recount the Slaughter? who can name
 The Groupe of vulgar Deaths, unknown to Fame?
 His Rage no Rule, his Sword no Limits knows; 385
 But bathes his Steps in Purple, as he goes:
 Limbs, Trunks and sever'd Heads he leaves behind,
 And hears their Groans remurmur'd in the Wind.
 Stretch'd on a Couch one doz'd, one press'd the Field,
 Another, stumbling, overlay'd his Shield: 390
 Here Goblets lie, there Weapons strew'd between,
 Of War, and foul Debauch, a motley Scene.
 Some on their massy Bucklers stood reclin'd,
 Like lifeless Statues; just as they're confin'd
 By *Morpheus* in the Bands of soft Repose. 395
 So various were the Postures of the Foes.
 Here, clad in Arms, *Saturnia* takes her Stand,
 A Torch held forth to guide her favour'd Band;
 She points the Bodies out, with Fury warms
 Their gen'rous Breasts, and strings their nervous Arms.
Thiodamas perceiv'd her, but suppress'd 401
 The silent Joy beneath his conscious Breast.
 Dull'd with Success, his Wrath is at a Stand;
 Blunt grows the Falchion, weary is his Hand.
 As when the Native of the *Caspian* Wood 405
 (Some Tiger fierce) has gorg'd his Maw with Food,
 His beauteous Spots confus'd with clotted Gore,
 He views the Prey, and grieves his Hunger's o'er.
 The weary Prophet thus surveys the Slain,
 And mourns his vanquish'd Arm, but mourns in vain:
 He wishes now a fresh Increase of Might, 411
 A hundred Arms, and hundred Hands to fight,

Then

Then tir'd of Menaces, and wordy Rage,
He hopes the rising *Thebans* may engage.

At Distance *Actor*, and the Chief, who trac'd 415
His Lineage from *Alcmena*'s Son, lay waste
The *Tyrian* Forces.—Each a Crowd succeeds,
And trails a bloody Path along the Meads.
The matted Grass stands high in sable Blood,
And from the Tents descends a reeking Flood. 420
The Breath of Sleep and Death thick steams around,
And with the recent Slaughter smoaks the Ground.
Supinely as at first, each *Theban* lies,
Nor lifts his Head, nor ope's his heavy Eyes.
With such wide-hov'ring Wings the God invades 425
The wretched Crew, and spreads o'er all his Shades.
Ialmenus, unknowing Rest, had strung
His Harp to *Phæbus*, and in Concert sung
A lofty *Pæan* in the *Tyrian* Strain,
Doom'd never to behold him rise again : 430
His Neck, with Sleep's incumbent Weight depress'd,
Swerv'd to the left, and sunk upon his Breast ;
This seen, *Agylleus* drove his piercing Brand
Sheer thro' his Breast, and struck his better Hand ;
Whose taper Fingers trembled on the Strings, 435
Forc'd by the Stroke the vital Spirit wings
Its Way to Hell.—The Tables down he spurns,
And backward in the Bowls the Wine returns :
The wid'ning Wound emits a copious Flood
Of *Bacchus*' heady Juice, and mingled Blood. 440
At *Thamyrus* the furious *Actor* flies,
As in his Brother's Arms entwin'd he lies ;
Pierc'd in the Back *Etheclus Tagus* flew :
From off his Neck the Head of *Hebrus* flew

By *Danaus'* Stroke : unconscious of his Death, 445
 Without one Pang or Groan he yields his Breath.
 Young *Palpetus* beneath the Chariot press'd
 The clay-cold Earth, and puffing from his Breast
 The nauseous Fumes, his Coursers terrified,
 That crop'd the flow'ry Herbage at his Side. 450
 From his gorg'd Mouth the filthy Liquor flows,
 And in his Veins, intoxicating, glows :
 When lo ! th' *Inachian* Prophet, as he snor'd,
 Deep in his Throat infix'd the shining Sword :
 Wine from his Wound came issuing as he died, 455
 And drown'd th' imperfect Murmur in the Tide.
 A deathful Vision haply then was sent
 In which he saw pourtray'd the dire Event ;
Thiodamus his Breast unguarded tore :
 So dream'd the luckless Chief, and wak'd no more. 460
 The Clouds dissolve in Dew upon the Plains,
 And of Night's Reign a Fourth alone remains :
Bootes flies before the greater Car
 Of *Sol*, and dim grows each inferior Star.
 And, Matter failing, Slaughter found an End, 465
 When prudent *Actor* thus accosts his Friend.

v. 457. *A deathful Vision*] This Image is very natural, and imitated from the tenth Book of the *Iliad*, ver. 496.

—— κακὸν γδ ὄναρ κεφαλῆφιν ἐπίειν
 Τὴν νύκτα, Οἰνέδαο τῷσι, Δῆμος μῆτιν Ἀθῆνας.

Shakespear's Tragedy of *Macbeth* presents us with as fine a Picture, where two of *Duncan's* Soldiers, just as their King was assassinated, are described starting out of their Sleep in the greatest Perturbation.

There's one did laugh in his Sleep, and one cry'd Murder,
 They wak'd each other, and I stood and hear'd them ;
 One cry'd God bless us, and Amen the other,
 As they had seen me with these Hangman's Hands.

Thiodamus,

Thiodamas, let this unhop'd for Joy
Find its due Bounds: here cease we to destroy.
Scarce one, I ween, of all this num'rous Train
Survives to war, and visit *Thebes* again; 470
Unless the deep'ning Streams of Blood conceal
Th' inglorious Coward from the vengeful Steel.
Then moderate thy yet successful Rage:
There want not Gods, who will for *Thebes* engage,
And even those who aided us before, 475
May fly, and give the longsome Labour o'er.
The Seer obeys, and lifting to the Skies
His Hands, embru'd in recent Slaughter cries:
Phæbus, the well-earn'd Trophies of the Night,
And First-fruits of the War, thy lawful Right, 480
Accept from me, thy Soldier and thy Priest,
Tho' foul and reeking from the bloody Feast,
If, patient of thee, right thy Gifts I use,
Thy Spirit often in my Breast infuse.
These Arms, and bloody Honours now suffice: 485
But, when our Country glads again our Eyes,
So many Gifts shall answer thy Demand,
And Oxen bleed beneath the Pontiff's Hand.
This said, his pious Pray'r the Chieftain ends.
And from the Fray recalls his pious Friends. 490
From *Calydon* and *Mænarus* there came
Two mighty Warriors not unknown to Fame,
Hopleus and *Dymas*, by their Kings approv'd,
Their Faith rewarded, and their presence lov'd:
Their Leaders lost, they loath the Light of Life. 495
Th' *Aetolian* first promotes the glorious Strife.
Say, dearest *Dymas*, does no Care remain,
No small Compassion for thy Sov'reign slain,

Whose Corse perhaps the famish'd Fowls of Air,
Or *Theban* Dogs with Rage relentless tear? 500

What then is left to grace his Country's Urn?
See, his fierce Mother waits for your Return!
But still the Ghost of *Tydeus*, void of Rest,
Stalks in my View, and rages in my Breast.

Tho' less expos'd to *Phæbus* he appears, 505
His Limbs well-harden'd, and confirm'd with Years.
Yet in the Search I'll range the Champain o'er,
And force my Way to *Thebes*. — He said no more,
For *Dymas* cut him short, and thus reply'd. —

By the Chief's wandering Shade, my greatest Guide. 510
And yon bright Stars, that gild the Skies, I swear,
That this same Heat and Energy I share.

Long have I sought a Partner in the Deed;
Now, back'd by thy Assistance, I'll precede.

This said, he leads the Way, and to the Skies 515
Lifting his Hands, in Height of Anguish cries.

O *Cynthia*, Queen of the mysterious Night,
If truly Fame reports it thy Delight

To wear a triple Form, and often change
Thy Virgin-Aspect in the sylvan Range, 520

Look down from Heav'n, and to these Eyes restore
Thy Comrade's Corse (thy Comrade now no more:)

He, fairest far of all th' *Arcadian* Boys,
Excites our Vengeance, and our Search employs.

The Goddess heard, and bright'ning ev'ry Ray, 525
Points her sharp Horn to where the body lay:

Then *Thebes* shines forth, *Cithæron*'s Hills arise
In Prospect fair, and steal into the Skies.

Thus when at Depth of Night avenging Jove
Rolls his hoarse Thunders thro' the Realms above, 530

The

The Clouds divide, the Stars serenely glow,
And sudden Splendors gild the World below.

Brave *Hopleus* catch'd the Rays, whose piercing Light
Presents the Corse of *Tydeus* to his Sight.

Both Bodies found, they raise a gladsome cry, 535

(The Sign agreed) and to the Weight apply
Their Shoulders; pleas'd, as if preserv'd from Death,
Each Corse was re-inspir'd with vital Breath.

Nor durst they give full Vent to Tears or Words;
Th' unfriendly Dawn no Leisure-time affords. 540

With Grief the paler Darkness they survey,
As thro' the silent Shades they bend their Way.

To pious Heroes Fate Success denies,
And Fortune rarely crowns the bold Emprike.

The Burden now grows lighter in their Hand, 545
As the whole Camp in Prospect they command,
When from behind black Clouds of Dust arise,
And sudden Sounds run echoing thro' the Skies.

Amphion, eager at the King's Command,
Conducts a Troop of Horse, to scour the Land, 550

v. 549. *Amphion, eager at the King's Command*] The Manner of the Discovery is similar to that of the Adventurers in the Ninth Book of the *Æneid*, and the Question put to them by the Enemy much the same.

Interea præmissi equites ex urbe Latina,
Cætera dum legio campis instructa moratur,
Ibant, et Turno regi responsa ferebant,
Tercentum, scutati omnes, Volscente magistro.
Jamque propinquabant castris, murosque subibant,
Cum procul hos lævo flectentes limite cernunt:
Et galea Euryalum sublustra noctis in umbra
Prodidit immemorem, radiisque adversa refulxit.
Haud temere est visum. Conclamat ab Agmine Volsens,
State, viri: quæ causa viæ? quive estis in armis?
Quove tenetis iter? — Verse 367.

And

And watch the Foe.—While far before his Train,
He spurs his Courier thro' the trackless Plain,
He catch'd a transient Glance (for yet the light
Had but in Part dispell'd the Shades of Night)
Of some faint Object, that at Distance strays, 555
He looks again, and doubts if he surveys.

The Fraud detected.—Stand, whoe'er you are,
(*Amphion* cries) and whence you come, declare.
Confess'd at length, the wretched Pair appear,
The wretched Pair rush on with Speed, and fear 560
Not for themselves.—He shakes his Javelin now,
And seems to meditate a deathful Blow;
Yet high in Air the missile Weapon cast,
Which wilful err'd, the Object far o'erpast:

Before the Face of *Dymas* fix'd it lay, 565
(Who started first) and check'd him in the Way.

But valiant *Aepyrtus* his Javelin toss'd
With Care, nor will'd the fair Occasion lost.

Through *Hopleus*' Back the well-aim'd Dart he flung,
And graz'd the Corse, that on his Shoulders hung.

He falls, not mindless of his Lord in Death, 571
But in the painful Grasp expires his Breath:

Too happy, had he reach'd the *Stygian* Coast
Just then, unknowing, that the Corse was lost.

This scap'd not *Dymas*: as he turn'd behind, 575
He sees the Troops, in his Destruction join'd,

v. 561. *He shakes his Javelin now]* This Circumstance is bor-
rowed from the tenth Book of Homer's Iliad, v. 372.

Ἡρο, καὶ ἔγχος ἀφῆκεν, ἵκαν δὲ οὐ μόρτανε φωτός.

Δεξιτερὸν δὲ ὑπὲρ ἄμεον ἔνεξός δεξός ἀκοντή.

Ἐν γαίῃ ἐπέγυν. οὐδὲ πρὸς ἐση, πάροντες το.

Uncertain

Uncertain or to tempt th' approaching Foes
 With soothing Blandishments, or ply with Blows.
 Wrath spurs to Combate, Fortune bids him try
 The Force of Pray'r: on none he can rely. 580
 Too wroth to sue, before his Feet he plac'd
 The wretched Corse, with Wounds unfelt disgrac'd;
 And tossing to the left a weighty Hide,
 (Which grac'd his Back, and hung with martial Pride,
 A Tiger's Spoils) pretends his naked Blade, 585
 And guards the Hero's Body, undismay'd:
 Prepar'd for ev'ry Dart, that comes, he turns:
 And with the Thirst of Death or Conquest burns.
 As the gaunt Lioness, whose cruel Den
 Is thick beset with clam'rous Hounds and Men, 590

v. 581. *Too wroth to sue, before his Feet he plac'd*] Nothing can exceed the Valour and Magnanimity of this Hero.—He would not surrender up the Body of his Friend, and knew that it was impossible to preserve it by carrying it on his Back, as it must necessarily tie up his Hands from making any Defence: He therefore places it on the Ground before his Enemies, as the Prize for which they were to fight.—His various Movements and Situation on this Occasion are well illustrated by the subsequent Comparison, which is imitated from *Homer*.

— “Ως τις τε λέων τερεψὶ οῖσι τέκεος”
 Ωι πάτε νήπιον οὐρανοτοσυται σὺ υλη
 “Ανδρες ἐπικτῆτες, ο δέ τε θένεις βλεμειάνει,
 Πᾶν δέ τε επισκοπίον ποίτω ἐλκετον, οὐσε παλύπτων. Il. B. 17. 133.

575 Ariosto in his *Orlando Furioso* has translated our Author's Comparison almost literally, with the single Difference of substituting a She Bear instead of a Lioness.

Com' Orsa, che l' alpestre cacciatore
 Nella pietrosa tana assalito abbia:
 Sta sopra i figli con incerto core,
 E freme in suoni di pietà, e di rabbia.
 Ira la invita, e natural furore
 A spiegar l'ugna, e insanguiner la sabbia;
 Amor la intenerisce, e la ritira
 A riguardar i figli in mezo all' ira.

Stands

Stands o'er her Whelps, erect, and sends around,
 Perplext with Doubts, a mournful, angry Sound.
 With Ease she might disperse the sable Train,
 And knap the Weapons with her Teeth in twain,
 But nat'r al Love o'ercomes the Lust of Fight: 595
 She foams with Rage, yet keeps her Whelps in Sight.
 The Falchion now lops off his weaker Hand,
 Tho' great *Amphion* check'd the furious Band,
 And by his Hair the Youth is drag'd along,
 By Fate resign'd to an insulting Throng. 600
 Then, nor till then, in suppliant Guise he bow'd
 His Sword, and thus address'd the ruthless crowd.
 More gently treat the tender Boy, I pray,
 By that blest Cradle, where young *Bacchus* lay,
 By luckless *Ino*'s Flight, and female Fears, 605
 And your *Palæmon*'s almost equal Years.
 If one among you tastes domestic Joys,
 If any here paternal Care employs,
 Heap o'er his poor Remains a little Sand,
 And to his Pyre apply one kindled Brand. 610

v. 609. *Heap o'er his poor Remains]* So Horace, Lib. 1. Ode 28.

At tu, nauta, vagæ ne parce malignus arenae
 Offibus, et capiti inhumato
 Particulam dare.

It was sufficient for all the Rites of Burial, that Dust should be thrice thrown on an unburied Body. This Kind of Sepulture is by Quintilian called *Collatitia sepultura*. It was an Act of Religion so indispensible, that no Person could be excused, and even the Pontifices, who were forbidden to approach or look on a dead Body, were obliged to perform this Duty, as *Servius* tells us in his Notes on the 6th Book of *Virgil's Æneid*. Thus, among the Jews, the High Priest was forbidden to approach his Father or Mother's and yet he was enjoined to inter any dead Body, which he found in the Road. — *Francis's Horace.*

His

His Looks, behold ! his Looks this Boon implore,
 First let the Monsters lap my spatter'd Gore :
 Me, me resign to the fell Birds of Prey ;
 'Twas I, who train'd, and forc'd him to the Fray.
 If such is thy Desire (*Ampbion* cries) 615
 To deck his Corse with fun'ral Obsequies,
 What, to redeem their Loss, the *Greeks* prepare,
 Their Schemes, their Counsels, and Resolves declare,
 As a Reward, the Light of Life enjoy,
 And, as thou wilt, intomb th' unhappy Boy. 620
 Th' *Arcadian*, full of Horror, scorn'd a Part
 So base, plung'd all the Poniard in his Heart,
 And cry'd.—Did nought, save this, remain to close
 My Country's Fate, that I shou'd tell her Foes
 Her fix'd Intents ? — we buy no fun'ral Pyre 625
 On Terms like these, nor wou'd the Prince require.
 He spake, and on his youthful Leader laid
 His Breast, wide-open'd by the trenchant Blade,
 And said in dying Accents.—Thou shalt have
 My lifeless Corse, a temporary Grave. 630
 Thus did the Warrior of *Ætolian* Race,
 And brave *Arcadian*, in the wish'd Embrace
 Of their lov'd Kings, expire their vital Breath,
 Rush on Destruction, and enjoy their Death.
 Embalm'd in Verse, illustrious Shades, you live, 635
 And share alike the Praise my Muse can give,
 Tho', rank'd at Distance in th' *Aonian* Quire,
 She boasts not loftier *Maro*'s tuneful Lyre :
 Perchance too *Nisus*, and his Friend may deign
 To stile you Comrades in th' *Elysian* Plain. 640

v. 639. *Perchance too Nisus and his Friend*] This is a very modest
 Character of one of the most beautiful Episodes I know. Neither
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But fierce *Amphion* to the regal Court
 A Herald sends, commission'd to report
 His Feats of Triumph, the Device explain,
 And render back each captive Corse again.
 He flies himself to brave the leaguer'd Foes, 645
 And each Associate's sever'd Visage shows.
 Meantime the *Grecians* from the Walls discern
Tbiodamas, and hail his safe return ;
 Nor cou'd they check the Gush of Joy, and hide
 The Smiles of secret Transport, when they spy'd 650
 The naked Swords, distain'd with Blood.—Again
 A louder Clamor runs thro' all the Train,
 Whilst, leaning o'er the Ramparts, they look down
 For the returning Troops, each for his own.
 Thus when a callow Brood of Birds descry 655
 Their Dam long-absent, as she cleaves the Sky,
 They long to meet her, and put forth their Heads
 Far from the Nest, whilst anxiously she dreads
 Lest, ere she reach the Tree, they fall,— then clings
 To the warm Nest, and flaps her loving Wings. 660

can I think it so much inferior to that of *Nisus* and *Euryalus*, as the Author seems to do himself. In *Virgil* we admire Friendship for the Living, but in *Statius* a generous Gratitude to the Dead; which, however, is given up to the Service of the Public. The Reply, which *Dymas* makes to *Amphion*, who tempted him to betray his Countrymen, with the Promise of Life and the Body of his Friend, is equal to any thing I have ever read in the sentimental Way.

v. 655. *Thus when a callow Brood*] There is an agreeable Simplicity in this Comparison, which may disgust many, who do not observe, that the Poet, accommodating himself to the Occasion, means only to describe the Impatience of the *Thebans* to see their Friends, who had accompanied the Expedition, and the Manner and Attitude, in which they posted themselves for Observation. He must have a very deprav'd Taste for Poetry, who would have this Image suppressed.

But,

But, whilst they clasp their Friends in their Embrace,
And count the Slaughter of the *Theban* Race,
For absent *Hopleus* some Concern they show,
And oft complain, that *Dymas* is too slow.

Behold! the Leader of the *Tyrian* Band, 665
Amphion comes, a Falchion in his Hand.

Damp'd was his Joy for the two Warriors slain,
When he beheld, what Carnage heap'd the Plain,
The Strength, and Bulwark of the *Thebans* lost,
And in one Ruin stretch'd a mighty Host. 670

His vital Frame a sudden Tremour shook,
Such as attends the Wretch, by Thunder struck:
Fix'd as a Stone, and motionless he stood,
And lost at once his Voice, his Sight, and Blood.

The Courser turns him, ere he bursts in Sighs: 675
The Dust rolls backward, as the Cohort flies.

With lengthen'd Strides the *Tyrians* sought the Gate,
When the brave *Grecians*, hearten'd and elate
With their nocturnal Triumph, to the Meads
Spring, full of Hopes, and urge their foaming Steeds
O'er Arms, and Blood and Bodies of the Slain, 680
Excite the Dust, and thunder thro' the Plain,
Their heavy Hoofs the Limbs of Heroes tore,
And the stain'd Axe-trees are clog'd with Gore.

v. 677. *With lengthen'd Strides*] Homer paints *Hector's* Progress in
the Eleventh Book of the Iliad, with the same Heat of Imagination.

Ὥς ἄρε φωνίτας, ἵματεν κακλίτριχας ἵππος
Μάση μένεντος τοι δέ, πληγῆς αἰολές,
Γίρφ' ἐφέρον θοὸν ἄρμα μετὰ Τοῶας καὶ Ἀχαιάς,
Στέσσοντες νέκυας τε καὶ ἀστίδας· αἵματι δέ τέλεων
Νέρετες ἀπας πεπάλακτο, καὶ ἀντυγεις αἱ περὶ δίφερον,
Ἄσ τοι ἀφ' ἵππουν ὁ πλέων φερεμιγύτες ἰσσαλον,
Αἱ τοι ἀπ' ἵππουνταν. —————

Sweet

Sweet is the Vengeance, pleasant is the Way, 685
 As if all *Thebes* in Dust low-humbled lay,
 And trampled with their Feet.—To these began
 Great *Capaneus*.—No longer on the Plan
 Of timid Caution, urge we the dark Fight,
 But let our Deeds be witness'd by the Light. 690
 By me no other Omens are explor'd,
 Than my victorious Hand, and naked Sword.
 He said; *Adrastus* and his Son inspire
 The Troops with Courage, and add Fire to Fire:
 The Augur then more sad and slow succeeds. 695
 And now that Day had clos'd their martial Deeds,
 The City enter'd; (while the wordy Chief
 Recounts their Loss, and tells the Tale of Grief)
 But *Megareus* the black Battalion ey'd
 Rising on Sight, and from the Watch-Tow'r cry'd. 700
 Shut, Sentry, shut the Gates, the Foe is near.—
 There is a Season, when Excess of Fear
 Augments our Vigour.—At the Word they rose,
 And all the Gates, save one, were seen to close:
 For whilst slow *Ecbion* at th' *Ogygian* toils, 705
 The *Spartan* Youth, inflam'd with Lust of Spoils,
 Rush boldly in, and in the Threshold fall,
 Their Blood thick dash'd against the hostile Wall:

v. 688. *No longer on the Plan*] With what a beautiful Abruptness does *Capaneus* break in upon us, and what a pleasingly-terrible Effect has his Speech upon our Minds! Some may admire the deliberate Valour of *Aeneas*; but give me the Impetuosity of *Achilles* and *Capaneus*: The former indeed is of the greatest Service to the State, but the latter makes the finest Figure in Poesy. There is an Eclat of Sentiment in this blunt and soldier-like Speech, that forces and commands our Attention: Every Word is animated with an enthusiastic Courage, and worthy to be delivered by a gallant Officer.

Brave

Brave *Panopeus* from high *Taygetus* came,
 To rough *Eurotas* *Oebalus* laid claim: 710
 And thou, *Alcidamas*, whom Fame reports
 A recent Victor in *Nemæan* Sports,
 Whose Wrists first *Tyndar*'s Son with Gauntlets bound,
 And with the season'd Cincture girt thee round,
 With dying Eyes behold'st thy Patron's Star, 715
 That sets, and gives thee to the Rage of War.
 Th' *Oebalian* Grove, the Margin of the Stream,
 From fair *Lacæna* stil'd, the Poet's Theme,
 And Haunt of the false Swan, thy Death shall mourn,
 And *Dian*'s Nymphs the doleful Notes return. 720
 Thy Mother too, who martial Precepts gave,
 And whose sage Lessons form'd thee wise and brave,
 Shall think, thou learn'dst too much.—Thus in the Gate
Mars rages on, and acts the Will of Fate.
 At length, their Shoulders to the Mats oppos'd, 725
 Great *Alimenides*, and *Acron* clos'd
 The Valves of Iron—kept the Foes at Bay,
 Barr'd the strong Portals, and exclude the Fray.
 Thus two stout Bullocks, groaning as they bow
 Their Necks, thro' Fields long-fallow from the Plough.

v. 729. *Thus two stout Bullocks*] The Image here given of the two Warriors is as lively as it is exact. Their Toil, Vigour, Nearness to each other, and the Difficulties they encounter with, perfectly answer to each Circumstance in the Comparison, which is abridg'd from *Homer*'s *Iliad*.

Ἄλλ' ας' οὐ νεῶ βόες οἴνοπε τηκίδην ἄροτρον,
 Ισον θυμὸν ἔχοντες, τιτανίνειον, ἀμφὶ δὲ ἄρχα σφιν
 Πρυμνοῖσιν κεράσεως πολὺς ἀνακηκλεῖς ιδεώσ.
 Τὰ μέν τε ζυγὸν οῖον ἐνζύον ἀμφὶς ἔργυει,
 Ιεμένω κρατὶ ἀλκη. τέμνει δὲ τε τίλσον ἀράγεν.

Book 13. Line 703.
 Their

Their Loss alas! was equal to their Gain : 731

For they exclude their Friends, while they retain
Their Enemies, coop'd up within the Walls.

First *Ormenus* of Grecian Lineage falls :

In suppliant Posture whilst *Amynthor* stood, 735

And with extended Hands for Mercy su'd,

His parted Visage fell upon the Ground,

Th' unfinish'd Accents ceas'd beneath the Wound,

And his gay Chain, the Work of artful Hands,

Clinks, Dust-dishonour'd on the hostile Sands. 740

Meantime the Trench is broke, the Out-works fall,

And leave a Passage open to the Wall,

Near which in Lines was rang'd the num'rous Band

Of Infantry.—The Coursers trembling stand,

Nor, though impatient, dare the Trench o'erleap, 745

The Prospect was so dark, the Gulph so deep.

Just on the Margin eagerly they neigh,

Then suddenly start back with wild Affray.

These strive to force the Gates, those pluck away

The Pales, that in the Ground deep-fasten'd lay ; 750

The Iron-Bars some labour to remove,

Whilst others from their sounding Places shove

Huge Stones.—Part see with Joy the Brands, they flung,

Stuck to the Spires, or on the Turrets hung ;

Part search the Bassis, and apply the Pow'r 755

Of the dark Shell, to sap each hollow Tow'r.

v. 744. *The Coursers trembling stand]* These Lines are imitated from the Twelfth Book of the Iliad, Line 50.

—Τάφρον ἐποτεύων Διφοινέμεν ὅδε οἱ ἵπποι
Τόλμων ὀκύποδες. μείλα ἢ γειμέπλου ἐπ' ἄκρω
Χέλει ἐφεκτοτες. ὅπὸ γαρ δεδιοστο τάφρο
Εὐρᾶ, οἵτ' αρ ὑπερθορέειν γεδόν, οἵτε περισσα
·Ρηδίη.

But

But the Besieg'd (for this Resource alone
Remain'd) the Summit of the Bulwarks crown ;
And Stakes, well-season'd in the Flames, vast Beams,
Well-polish'd Darts, that shed incessant Gleams, 760
And heated Bullets from the Ramparts throw,
And rob the Walls of Stones, to gaul the Foe.

The weapon'd Windows hissing Javelins pour,
And thick around descends the steely Show'r.

As when on *Malea*, or *Ceraunia's* Hill 765

The Cloud-wrapt Tempests, motionless and still,
Collect new Forces, and augment their Rage,
Then sudden Combate with old Ocean wage.

Thus the beleag'ring *Greeks* without the Wall
Of *Thebes*, o'erpowr'd with hostile Numbers fall. 770

Their Breasts and Faces obvious to the Fray,
The thickning Tempest drives them not away :
Mindless of Death, strait to the Walls they turn
Their Looks, and their own Darts alone discern.
His Scythe-hung Car round *Thebes* while *Antaeus*
drove,

A *Tyrian* Lance arrests him from above : 776

Numb'd with the Stroke, his Hand dismiss'd the
Rein ;

He tumbles backward, fasten'd to the Wain
By his bright Greaves.—O wond'rous Fate of War !
His Arms are trail'd by the swift-rolling Car. 780
Beneath the smoaking Wheels two Ruts appear,
The third imprinted by the hanging Spear :
His graceful Head depending on the Strand,
His bloody Tresses purple all the Sand.

Meantime the Trumpet kindles fierce Alarms 785

Thro' the sad City, and excites to Arms,

Thund'ring at ev'ry Door it's baleful Call.

Their Posts assign'd by Lot, before them all

The Standard-Bearer carries in his Hand

Th' imperial Ensign of the *Tyrian* Band. 790

Dire was the Face of Things with such a Scene

Not *Mars* himself would have delighted been.

Flight, circumfus'd in Gloom, nor rul'd by Thought,
Fear, Sorrow, and Despair, to Fury wrought,

The madding Town with doubtful Horrors rend, 795

And in one Subject various Passions blend.

You'd swear, the War was there.—The Tow'rs resound

With frequent Steps; the Streets are fill'd around:

With Fancy's Eye they view the Fire and Sword,

And wear the Fetters of an Argive Lord. 800

Preventing Fear absorb'd the Time to come:

They fill with Shrieks each House, and holy Dome;

Th' ungrateful Altars are besieg'd with Tears,

And the same Terror rules all Ranks and Years.

v. 785. *Mean Time the Trumpet*] After this melancholy Description of the Fate of *Antebeus*, how are we startled at the sudden Sound of the Clarion! There is an equally abrupt Transition from the Pathetic to the Terrible, in the Ninth Book of *Virgil's Aeneid*, where our Concern for the distress'd Mother of *Euryalus* is interrupted by

At tuba terribilem sonitum procul ære canoro
Increpuit.

The

The old Men pray for Death: the Youth by Turns
 Grows pale with Fright, or with Resentment burns: 805
 The trembling Courts the female Shrieks rebound,
 Their Infant-Sons, astonish'd at the Sound,
 Nor knowing, whence the Streams of Sorrow flow,
 Condole, and melt in sympathetic Woe. 810
 Love calls the Dames together.—At this Hour
 The Sense of Shame gives Place to Fortune's Pow'r.
 They arm the Men, with Courage fire each Breast,
 Schemes of Revenge with ready Wit suggest,
 And, rushing with them, lay before their Eyes 815
 Their Homes, and Babes, the Pledge of nuptial Ties.
 Thus when some Shepherd-Swain essays to drive
 The Bees thick cluster'd from their cavern'd Hive,
 In fable Clouds they rise, assert their Right,
 And, buzzing, urge each other to the Fight:

v. 805. *The old Men*] The Description of the different Effects this Conternation had upon the different Stages of Life, is executed with an amazing Spirit and Propriety; every Circumstance is Nature, and Nature without Disguise.

v. 817. *Thus when*] This Simile seems to have been taken from one in the Twelfth Book of the *Aeneid*, which, according to Mons. *Catrou*, is imitated from *Apollonius Rhodius*, *Argonautics*, Lib. 1. Verse 130.

"Ως δὲ μέλισσαν σφῦνθε μέγα μηλοβοτήρες
 'Ηε μελισσόμοις πέτην ἐνὶ καπνείοντι,
 Αι δέ τοι τείως μὲν πολλες ω ενι σίμολω
 Βομβόδου κλονέονται, ἐπὶ πρὸ δὲ λιγνύστηται
 Καπνια τύφομενα πέτρης ἐκάς ἀποκοτινούσι.

Virgil's is.

Inclusas ut cum latebroso in Pumice Pastor
 Vestigavit apes, fumoque implevit amaro;
 Illæ intus trepidæ rerum per cerea castra
 Discurrunt, magnisque acuunt stridoribus iras.
 Volvitur ater odor tectis; tum murmure cæco
 Intus saxa sonant: vacuas it fumus ad auras.

498 STATIUS's THEBAID. Book X.

At length, deserted by their blunted Stings,
They clasp the honey'd Sweets with weary Wings,
And, pressing to them, take a last Farewell
Of their long-labour'd Combs, and captive Cell.

The Vulgar too each other's Schemes oppose 825
Kindled by them, the Flame of Discord glows.
With open Voice these wish the Crown restor'd.
And claim great *Polynices* for their Lord.

All Rev'rence lost.—No longer let him roam
(One cries) remote from his paternal Home, 830
But hail his Household-Gods, his Sire again,
And take Possession of his annual Reign.

Say, why shou'd I with frequent Blood atone
For the King's Crimes, and Perj'ry not my own?
Late, much too late (another Chief replies) 835
Comes that Advice, when the wrong'd Foe relies

On speedy Conquest.—A more Abject Crew
With Pray'rs and Tears to sage *Tiresias* sue,
And, as some Solace, urge him to disclose
The future Times, or fraught with Bliss or Woes. 840
But he the mighty Secret still suppress'd
Within the dark Recesses of his Breast,
And thus.—Why did your King my Counsel slight,
When I forbade him the perfidious Fight?

Yet thee, ill-fated *Thebes*! shou'd I pass o'er, 845
And lose th' Occasion, which returns no more,
I cannot hear thy Fall, nor view the Light
Of *Grecian* Fires with these dim Orbs of Sight.

Then yield we, Piety.—O Damsel, place
A Pile of Altars to th' immortal Race. 850
This done, the Nymph inspects with curious Eyes,
And tells her Sire, that ruddy Tops arise

From

BOOK X. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 499

From the divided Flames, but at the Height
The middle Fire emits a clearer Light ;
Then she informs him doubtful, that the Blaze 855
Describ'd a Snake, roll'd up in circling Maze,
And varying, almost lost its bloody Hue,
And paints all to his intellectual View.
By her Instructions taught, the pious Sire
With Joy embrac'd the Wreath-encircled Fire, 860
And catches on his glowing Face, and Brows,
The Vapours, that the Will of Fate disclose.
His sordid Locks, now stiff with Horror, stand,
And lift above his Head the trembling Band :
You'd think, his Eyes unclos'd, his Cheeks resume
Their long-lost Colour, and exhausted Bloom. 866
At length he gave a Loose to Rage, and cried,
Ye guilty *Thebans*, hear what Fates betide
Your City, the Result of Sacrifice :
Its Safety may be bought, tho' high the Price. 870
The * Snake of *Mars*, as his due Rite, demands
A human Victim from the *Theban* Bands ;
Fall he, whoe'er amidst our num'rous Trains
The last of the fell Dragon's Race remains :
Thrice happy, who can thus adorn his Death, 875
And for so great a Meed resign his Breath !
Near the fell Altars of the boding Chief
Sad *Creon* stood, and fed his Soul on Grief :
Yet then he only wept his common Fate,
And the near Ruin of th' *Aonian* State, 880
When sudden as the vengeful Shaft arrests
Some hapless Wretch, deep sinking in his Breasts,

* The Dragon whose Teeth were sown by *Cadmus*.

Pale Horror fix'd him, when he hear'd the Call,
 Which summons brave *Menœceus* to his Fall.
 A clammy Sweat crept cold o'er ev'ry Part, 885
 Fear froze his Veins, and thrill'd thro' all his Heart.
 Thus the *Trinacrian* Coast sustains the Tide
 Afar rebounding from the *Lybian* Side.
 Whilst for the Victim the stern Prophet cries,
 Full of th' inspiring God, in suppliant Guise 890
 Around his Knees the tender Father clung,
 And strove in vain to curb his boding Tongue
 Swift Fame then makes the sacred Answer known,
 And the dread Oracle flies round the Town.
 Now, *Clio*, say, who this young Warrior fir'd, 895
 And in his Breast Contempt of Death inspir'd!
 (For ne'er, in Absence of the Pow'rs divine,
 Cou'd Mortal harbour such a brave Design)
 Pursue the mighty Theme: to thee alone
 The storied Deeds of early Times are known. 900
Jove's fav'rite Goddess press'd the Throne, from whence
 The Gods rare Virtue's costly Gifts dispense
 Midst Earth's best Sons:—Whether Almighty *Jove*
 Consign'd it to them from well-founded Love,
 Or, mindful of their Merits, she might chuse 905
 In ample Breasts the glorious Sparks t' infuse;
 She sprung, all gladsome, from the Realms of Day:
 With Def'rence meet the brightest Stars give Way,

v. 895. *Now, Clio, say]* The Grandeur of this Machinery must delight every one, who has the least Tincture of Taste; and, indeed this whole Story is very affecting. The patriotic Heroism of *Menœceus* in particular, is finely contrasted by the tender Affection, and fatherly Love of *Creon*.

And

And Signs, which for their Feats and genuine Worth
 Herself had fix'd in Heav'n.—She lights on Earth, 910
 Her Face not far remote from Air,— appears
 In *Manbo's* Form, and looks of equal Years,
 That her Responses might due Credit gain,
 She quits awhile the Badges of her reign:
 No more of Terror in her Eyes is seen; 915
 Smooth is her Brow, and less severe her Mien:
 The Sword and Arms of Death are thrown aside,
 And by the *Augur's* Staff their Place supply'd.
 Her loosely-flowing Garments sweep the Ground,
 And her rough laurell'd Hair with Fillets bound. 920
 Yet her stern Visage, and the steps she trod
 With longsome Strides reveal the latent God.
 Thus smil'd the *Lydian Queen*, when she descri'd
Alcides, stript of his terrific Hide,
 Shine in embroider'd Vests, and Robes of Cost, 925
 On his broad Back, and brawny Shoulders lost,
 When *Pallas'* Arts with ill Success he try'd,
 And broke the Timbrel, which in vain he ply'd.
 Nor thee, *Menaceus*, does the Goddess find
 Unworthy of the Honours she design'd: 930
 Before the *Theban* Tow'r's she sees thee stand,
 With early Worth preventing her Command.
 Soon as th' enormous Portals wide unclose,
 How didst thou quash the Pride of *Argive* Foes!

v. 923. *Thus smil'd the Lydian Queen*] The Fortitude of *Hercules* was not equal to his Amorousness. He fell in Love with *Omphale*, Queen of *Lydia*, and in order to win her Affections by his Obsequiousness, condescended to change the Lion's Hide for a Suit of Purple, and the Club for a Distaff.

Thus *Hæmon* rages too: but tho' you shine 935
 Brothers in all, the greater Praise is thine.
 The breathless Carcasses are heap'd around:
 Sure flies each Dart, each Weapon bears a Wound.
 Nor yet was Virtue present.—Ne'er he stands, 940
 Unbent his Mind, unexercis'd his Hands:
 His Arms no Leisure know, the Sphinx pourtray'd
 Upon his Helm seems mad: the Blood survey'd,
 Th' enliven'd Effigy springs forth to View,
 And the dull Copper wears a brighter Hue! 945
 When now the Goddess check'd his furious Hand, 945
 And thus accosts him, as he lifts the Brand.
 O noble Youth, whose Claim of Lineage *Mars*
 With Joy accepts, resign these humble Wars;
 This Palm is not thy Due.—The Stars invite 950
 Thy Soul away, and promise more Delight.
 My Sire now rages in the joyful Fane:
 This Sense the Flames and Fibres ascertain,

v. 941. *The Sphinx pourtray'd*] Though some Readers may think this Image too bold, it is evident *Tasso* did not, from his Imitation of it. *Jerus. Del. Can. 9. St. 25.*

Porta il Soldan su'l elmo orrido e grande,
 Serpe, che si dilunga, e'l collo snoda
 Su le zampe s' inalza, e l'ali spande,
 E piega in arco la forcuta coda,
 Par che tre lingue vibri, e che fuor mande
 Livida spuma, e che l' suo fischio s' oda.
 Ed or, ch' arde la pugna anch' ei s' infiamma
 Nel moto, e fumo versa insieme, e fiamma.

v. 949. *The Stars invite*] These Verses are imitated by the last quoted Author, in the Second Book of his *Jerusalem*, where *Sophronia* says to *Olindo*,

— Lieto aspira alta superna fede:
 Mira il ciel, com' e bello, e mira il sole,
 Ch' a se par, che n' inviti, e ne console. Stan. 36.

This

This *Phæbus* urges: thee all *Thebes* demands,
 To save the Rest of her devoted Bands.
 Fame sings the sacred Answer, and our Youth 955
 With Shouts of Triumph hail the Voice of Truth.
 Embrace the glorious Offer then, nor waste
 The Time away, but to Fruition haste,
 Lest *Hæmon* start before thee.—Thus she spake,
 And fann'd the Sparks of Virtue still awake; 960
 Then, clearing all his Doubts with lenient Art,
 She winds herself, unseen, into his Heart.
 Swift as assaile'd by *Jove*'s unerring Aim,
 The blasted Cypress takes th' ethereal Flame,
 From Top to Stern with bright Contagion spread; 965
 The Youth (so well her forceful Influence sped)
 Feeds the new Ardours, kindled in his Breast,
 And longs for Death, each meaner Thought supprest.
 But when he 'gan at Leisure to survey
 Her Gait and Habit, as she turns away, 970
 And mingling with the Clouds, eludes his Eyes,
 In Height of Admiration, thus he cries.
 Willing, O Goddess, we obey thy Call,
 Nor meet with passive Sloth the destin'd Fall:
 —And while from Fight, obsequious, he withdrew,
Agreus of *Pylos* near the Trenches flew. 976
 At length, supported by his menial Train,
 He goes: the Vulgar hail him o'er the Plain
 With Names of Patriot, Champion, God, inspire
 An honest Pride, and set his Soul on Fire. 980
 And now to *Thebes* his hasty Course he bends,
 Well-pleas'd to have escap'd his wretched Friends,
 When *Creon* met him, and would fain accost,
 But his Breath fail'd, his Utterance was lost.

Awhile

Awhile both silent and dejected stand, 985
 At length his Sire began with kind Demand.
 Say, prithee, what new Stroke of Fortune calls
 My Son from Fight, when *Greece* surrounds our Walls?
 What worse than cruel War dost thou prepare,
 Why do thy Eyes with Rage unwonted glare, 990
 Why o'er thy Cheeks such savage Paleness reigns,
 And ill thy Face a Father's Look sustains?
 Heard'st thou the forg'd Responses? — It appears
 Too well.— My Son, by our unequal Years,
 I pray thee, and thy wretched Mother's Breasts, 995
 Trust not, O trust not, what the Seer suggests.
 Think'st thou, the Pow'rs, that haunt yon starry Height,
 Vouchsafe to shed down intellectual Light
 On such a Dotard, whose perpetual Gloom, 999
 And Age approach th' incestuous Monarch's Doom?
 Yet more — the King may deal with secret Fraud,
 And for some End spread these Reports abroad,
 For well I ween, he views with jealous Eye
 Thy first-rate Valour, and Nobility.
 Perchance these pompous Words, which we suppose
 Divine, from his too fertile Brain arose. 1006
 Give not thy heated Mind the Reins of Sway,
 Allow some Interval, some short Delay:

v.987. *Say, prithee*] One seldom meets with a finer Piece of dissuasive and pathetic Eloquence, than this Oration of *Creon*. The Circumstances of Distress shew a judicious Choice in the Poet, and are expressed in a very happy Manner. The Question *Creon* puts to his Son, in *Heard'st thou*, &c. and the preventing his Confusion by answering it himself, is a striking Instance of the Poet's Taste in the Use of Figures. The Odium he afterwards throws on *Eteocles*, and the ridiculous Light he sets *Tiresias* in, to give Weight to his Dehortation, is very artful.

Impetuous

Impetuous Haste misguides us oft.—O grant
This last, this modest Boon; tis all I want. 1010
So be thy Temples silver'd o'er with Age;
So may a Father's Cares thy Thoughts engage,
And cause the Fears, thy rash Designs inspire;
Ne'er then, O ne'er forsake thy wretched Sire.
Why should the Pledges of another's Love, 1015
And alien Parents thy Compassion move?
If ought of Shame remains, first tend thy own:
This is true Piety, and true Renown.
The other's a meer Shade, a transient Breath
Of Fame, and Titles lost in gloomy Death. 1020
Nor think, I check thee thro' Excess of fear:
Go, mix in Combate — toss the pointed Spear,
And dare the thickest Horrors of the Plain:
Where Chance is equal, I will ne'er restrain.
O let me cleanse with Tears the Stain of Blood, 1025
And with my Hairs dry up the surging Flood:
Thus thou may'st fight, o'ercome and triumph still;
This is thy Country's Choice, thy Father's Will.
Thus in Embrace his troubled Son he holds,
And round his Neck his Arms encircling folds; 1230
But neither cou'd the copious Stream of Grief,
Nor Words unbend the Heav'n-devoted Chief.
Yet more, the Gods suggesting, he relieves
His Father's Fears, and with this Tale deceives.
O best of Parents! let not idle Fear 1035
Disturb thy Bliss: no Phrenzy of the Seer,
No Phantoms of the Dead, nor Signs from Jove
Sollicit me to quit this Light above.
Still may *Tiresias* to his Friends impart
The God's Response, and try each priestly Art: 1040
Nor

Nor should I lay aside my fix'd Design,
 Tho' *Phæbus* warn me from his open Shrine.
 But my dear Brother's sad Mischance recalls
 My willing Steps to these ill-omen'd Walls ;
 Pierc'd by an *Argive* Spear, my *Hæmon* lies 1045
 Between both Hosts, and soon the *Grecians'* Prize :
 So thick the Foe surrounds, that scarce I trust,
 This Arm can reach him midst th' insanguin'd Dust.
 But why do I delay ? — Go, raise again
 His drooping Spirits, and command the Train 1050
 To bear him off with Care.— I haste to find
Eetion, skill'd, o'er all the healing Kind, .
 To close up Wounds, to staunch the Flux of Blood,
 And stop the Flight of Life's low-ebbing Flood.
 His Speech broke off, away the Hero sped ; 1055
 A sudden Gloom his Father's Mind o'erspread :
 His Love's divided, ill his Tears agree,
 Yet he believes, impell'd by Destiny.
 Meantime fierce *Capaneus* pursues the Train,
 Whom *Tyrian* Portals vomit on the Plain, 1060
 And swells with frequent Deaths the guilty Field :
 Horse, Foot and Charioteers before him yield ;
 And, their pierc'd Drivers thrown, th' unbridled Steeds
 Crush out their Souls, and thunder o'er the Meads.

v. 1059. *Mean time fierce Capaneus]* With what dreadful Pomp is *Capaneus* ushered in here ! in what bold Colours has the Poet drawn his Impetuosity and Irresistibility, and what a grand Idea does he give us of his Hero, when he tells us, that by his valorous Feats he kept the *Greeks* in such a perpetual Round of Attention, that they had not Time to reflect upon the Loss of their four Commanders, or if they did, that they thought *Capaneus* was equal to all of them together, and that his Body was animated by their Souls.

He

He reeks in Blood, the lofty Tow'r's affails 1065

With Stones, and wheresoe'er he turns, prevails.

One while he plied his Sling, and dealt around

From swift-hurl'd Bullets a new Kind of Wound,

Then, launching forth a Dart, his Arm he swung

Aloft. No Weapon idle fell, he flung, 1070

Nor, innocent of Blood, return'd again,

But levell'd some proud Warrior on the Plain.

Their Place by him supplied, the Grecian Host

No longer deem their mightiest Leaders lost,

Oenides, Atalanta's youthful Son,

1075

Amphiaraus, and stern Hippomedon:

In him they meet, inspire an equal Flame,

And animate by Turns his vital Frame.

Nor Age, nor Rank, nor Form his Pity moves,

The proud and meek alike his Fury proves. 1080

Not one durst with him try the Chance of War,

Or stand in Arms oppos'd.—They dread from far

His temper'd Armour, his tremendous Crest,

And glitt'ring Helm, with various Forms imprest.

Meanwhile *Menæceus* on the Walls was seen, 1085

Divine his Aspect, more august his Mien :

His Casque aside the pious Hero threw,

And stood awhile, confess'd to public View;

From thence he cast an Eye of Pity down

On either Host, that fought before the Town, 1090

And, Silence and a Truce from War injoin'd,

Thus spoke the Purpose of his gen'rous Mind.

Ye Pow'r's of War, and thou, whose partial Love

Grants me this Honour, *Phæbus*, Son of *Jove*,

O give to *Thebes* the Joys so dearly sought, 1095

Those mighty Joys, by my own Life-blood bought:

Return

Return the War, on *Lerna*'s captive Coast
 Dash the foul Remnants of her vanquish'd Host ;
 And let old *Inachus* with adverse Waves
 Shun his fam'd Offspring, now dishonour'd Slaves.
 But let the *Thebans* by my Death obtain 1101
 Their Fanes, Lands, Houses, Children, Wives again.
 If ought of Merit my Submission claim,
 If, undismay'd, I hear'd the Prophet name
 Myself the Victim, nor with Fear withdrew, 1105
 Assenting, ere my Country deem'd it true,
 To *Thebes*, I pray, in lieu of me be kind,
 And teach my cred'lous Sire to be resign'd.
 He said, and pointing to his virtuous Breast
 The glitt'ring Blade, attempts to set at Rest 1110
 Th' indignant Soul, that frets and loaths to stay,
 Imprison'd in its Tenement of Clay :
 He lustrates with his Blood the Walls and Tow'rs,
 And throws himself amidst the banded Pow'rs,
 And, grasping still the Sabre in his Hands, 1115
 Essays to fall on the stern *Grecian* Bands.
 But Piety and Virtue bear away,
 And gently on the Ground his Body lay ;
 While the free Spirit stands before the Throne
 Of *Jove*, and challenges the well-earn'd Crown. 1120

v. 1119. *While the free Spirit*] This Passage recals to my Mind
 some fine Lines of *Lucan*, in which he describes the Residence of
 Pompey's Soul, after it was separated from the Body.

At non in Pharia manes jacuere favillâ :
 Nec cinis exiguis tantam compescuit umbram.
 Profiluit busto, semiustaque membra relinquens,
 Degeneremque rogum, sequitur convexa Tonantis,
 Quâ niger astriferis connectitur axibus Aer,
 Quodque patet terras inter Lunæque meatus
 Semidei manes habitant : quos ignea virtus

Innocuos

Now to the Walls of *Thebes* with joyful Care
The Hero's Corse, with Ease obtain'd, they bear.
The *Greeks* with decent Reverence survey
The solemn Pomp, and willingly give way :
On youthful Shoulders borne, amidst a Train 1125
Of either Sex, who break into a Lane,
He passes on, to Rank celestial rais'd,
And more than *Cadmus* or *Amphion* prais'd.
These o'er his lifeless Limbs gay Garlands fling ;
Those single Flow'rs, the Produce of the Spring, 1130
And in his Ancestor's Time, honour'd Tomb
Depose the Body, od'rous with Perfume.
The Rites of Praise perform'd, they strait renew'd
The Combate.—Here, his Wrath at Length subdu'd,
In Groans the mournful *Creon* seeks Relief, 1135
And the sad Mother weeps away her Grief.
For cruel *Thebes* by me then wast thou bred,
And have I nourish'd thy devoted Head,
Like some vile Dame ?—What Mischiefs have I done,
And to what Gods thus odious am I grown ? 1140

Innocuos vitâ patientes ætheris imi
Fecit, & æternos animam collegit in orbes :
Non illuc auro positi, nec thure sepulti
Perveniant; illic postquam se lumine vero
Implevit stellasque vagas miratur, et astra
Fixa Polis, vedit quanta sub nocte jaceret
Nostra dies, risitque sui ludibria trunci. *Phars. Lib. 9.*

v. 1132. *Od'rous*] I cannot but think *adratum* a typographical Error, and would therefore substitute *odoratum* in its stead, which those, who are acquainted with the funeral Rites of the Ancients will, I doubt not, approve of, it being the Custom to perfume the Bodies of the Dead before Burial. I hope the Reader will pardon this Conjecture, if he does not coincide with me.

510 STADIUS THEBAID. Book X.

No interdicted Pleasures did I prove,
Nor wast thou, Offspring of incestuous Love.
Jocasta's Sons command the deathful Plain,
Fate gives the Scepter, and she sees them reign.
Let us for this ill-omen'd War atone, 1145
That they may mount by Turns the fully'd Throne.
(This pleases thee, O Cloud-compelling Jove)
Why censure I. or Men or Gods above?
Tis thou, *Menæceus*, who has caus'd my Fall;
On thee it rests, the guilty Source of all. 1150
From whence this Love of Death, that seiz'd thy Mind,
And holy Rage? how diff'rent in their Kind
From their sad Mother these my Children prove,
Fruits of my Throes, and Pledges of my Love!
Full well alaſſ! the fatal Cause I read 1155
In the fell Snake, and War-producing Mead:
Hence headstrong Valour, impotent of Rest,
Usurp'd my Share in Guidance of thy Breast,
And, unconstrain'd, nay 'gainſt the Will of Fate,
Thou wing'ſt thy Way to *Pluto*'s gloomy State. 1160
Much of the *Greeks* and *Capaneus* I hear'd;
Yet this, this Hand alone was to be fear'd,
And Weapon, which imprudently I gave:
Yet why? — It was fit Present for the Brave
See, the wide Wound absorbs the Length of Sword,
Deep as the fiercest *Argive* could have gor'd. 1166
More had she said, unknowing Check or Bound,
And sadden'd with her Wailings all around;
But her consoling Comrades homeward led
Th' unwilling Dame, and plac'd her on the Bed: 1170
There, her torn Cheeks suffus'd with Blood, she lay,
Deaf to Advice, and sickn'ing at the Day;

And,

And, her Voice gone, and all confus'd her Mind,
Still kept her languid Eyes on Earth declin'd.
The *Scythian* Tigress thus beneath some Cave 1175
For her stol'n Whelps is often seen to rave,
And, couching at the vasty Mouth alone,
Scents the fresh Trace, and licks the tepid Stone.
Her Hunger, Wrath, and native Rage subside,
In Grief consum'd.—Securely by her Side, 1180
With passive Impotency she surveys
The Flocks and Herds on verdant Pasture graze,
For where are those, for whom she now shou'd feed
Her Dugs, and range, in quest of Prey, the Mead.
Thus far have Arms and Death adorn'd our lays, 1185
And War's grim Horrors been a Theme of Praise:
Now be the Song to *Capaneus* transferr'd.
No more I grovel with the vulgar Herd,

v. 1175. *The Scythian Tigress thus*] The Grief of *Menœceus*'s Mother for the Loss of her Son, is aptly enough pourtray'd by this Simile of the Tigress; the Hint of it may have possibly been taken from the following Comparison in the Eighteenth Book of *Homer's Iliad*.

————— Ωμωρε λίσ ήγένεια
Ωὶ ρά̄ δ' ὑπὸ σκύμνες ἐλαφησόλῳ ἀρπάσση ἀνήρ
Τλης ἐκ πυκνίης. ὁ δὲ τὸν ἀχνυταῖς ὑσερῷ ἐλθών.
Πολλὰ δὲ τὸν ἀγχεῖς πῆλθε μετ' αὐτῷ οἴχυς ἐρευνῶν,
Εἰσοδεις ἐξεύροις μάλα γαρ δριμὺς χόλῳ αἰρεῖ. Verse 318.

This is natural enough, but the Images contained in

————— Tepidi lambit vestigia faxi.
————— Eunt præter secura armenta, gregesque
Aut quos ingenti premat expectata rapina.

Are perhaps equal to any thing in the *Homeric Allusion*.

v. 1185. *Thus far have Arms*] The Poet raises the Character of his Hero very much by this Invocation. One Muse suffic'd before, but he now summons all the Nine, by which the Grandeur of the Subject is very much enhanced, and the Difficulty of singing his great Exploits very strongly imaged.

But,

But, catching Fury from th' *Aonian Grove*,
 Uncircumscrib'd, thro' Realms of *Æther* rove. 1190
 With me, ye Muses, prove the high Event.—
 Whether from deepest Night this Rage was sent,
 Or the dire Furies, rang'd beneath his Sign,
 Impell'd him to confront the Pow'rs divine,
 Or Rashness urg'd him on, or Lust of Fame, 1195
 Which woos by per'lous Feats a deathless Name,
 Or Preludes of Success, Heav'n sent to draw
 The guilty Wretch, to break calm Caution's law;
 He loaths all earthly Joys; the Rage of Fight
 Palls on his Soul, and Slaughter shocks his Sight:
 And, all his Quiver spent, he lifts on high 1201
 His weary Arm, and points it to the Sky,
 He rolls his wrathful Eyes round, metes the Height,
 Of the tall Rampires, and th' unnumber'd Flight
 Of Steps, and strait of two compacted Trees, 1205
 A Ladder forms, to scale the Walls with Ease.
 Now, dreadful from afar, he bares to View
 A clefted Oak, that lighten'd as he flew:
 His burnish'd Arms too ruddy Splendors yield,
 And the Flame kindles on his blazing Shield. 1210
 Virtue directs me by this Path (he cry'd)
 To *Thebes*, by which the slipp'ry Tow'r is dy'd
 With brave *Menæceus*' Blood.—Then let me try,
 If sacred Rites avail, or *Phæbus* lie.
 He said, and, mounting up the captive Wall 1215
 By Steps alternate, menaces its Fall.
 Such in mid Air the fierce *Alcidæ* show'd,
 When Earth's bold Sons with vain Ambition glow'd,
 Ere *Pelion* (hideous Height) was hurl'd above,
 Or *Offa* cast a Shade on trembling *Jove*. 1220

Th' astonish'd

Th' astonish'd *Thebans* then, on th' utmost Verge
 Of fated Ruin, the sharp Contest urge,
 Nor less, than if *Bellona*, Torch in Hand,
 Was bent to fire their Town, and waste their Land,
 Huge Beams and Stones from ev'ry Quarter fling,
 And ply with Haste the *Balearic* Sling : 1226

(For now no Hope, no Dawn of Safety lies
 In Darts, and random Shafts, that wing the Skies)
 Vast Engines too, in Passion's giddy Whirl,
 And massy Fragments at the Foe they hurl. 1230

The Weapons, that from ev'ry Part are thrown,
 Deter him not, nor fetch the Warrior down :
 Hanging in empty Air, his Steps he guides,
 Secure of Danger, and with longsome Strides,
 As on plain Ground, maintains an equal Pace, 1235
 Tho' Death on all Sides stares him in the Face.

Thus some deep River, thund'ring in it's Course,
 Turns on an aged Bridge its watry Force :
 And, as the loosen'd Stones and Beams give Way,
 Doubles its Rage, and strives to wash away 1240

The Mass inert, nor ceases, till it sees
 Th'obstructing Pile dispers'd, and flows with Ease.
 Soon as he reach'd the Turret's long-fought Height
 (Tho' lessen'd, yet conspicuous to the Sight)
 And scar'd the *Thebans* with his bulky Shade, 1245
 He cast a downward Look, and vaunting said.

v. 1237. *Thus some deep River*] I know nothing that can give us a more terrible Idea of *Capaneus* assaulting the *Theban* Fortifications, than this Comparison of a River's beating with Violence against a Bridge : There is great Majesty of Style, and Variety of Images in it, and the Simile itself contains such an exact Point of Likeness, as cannot fail of pleasing every Reader of Taste.

Are these the Bulwarks then, is this the Wall,
 That erst obey'd *Amphion*'s tuneful Call?
 Are these the fabled Theme, and storied Boast
 Of *Thebes*? shall these oppose our conq'ring Host? 1250
 What Honour, tho' beneath our frequent Stroke
 These Lyre-constructed Tow'rs should yield?—he spoke,
 And with his Hands and Feet fast-hurling down
 The Coins and Beams compacted, lays the Town
 Part-open.—Then the Bridge-form'd Works divide,
 And the Stone-Joists from off the Ridges slide. 1256
 The Fortress broken down, again he takes
 Advantage of the Ruin, which he makes,
 And, gath'ring rocky Fragments, as they fall,
 Destroys the Town with its own shiver'd Wall. 1260
 Meantime round *Jove*'s bright Throne the Pow'rs divine
 For *Thebes* and *Greece* in fierce Contention join:
 To both alike impartial, he descries
 Their animated Wrath with careless Eyes.
 Restrain'd by *Juno*, *Bacchus* inly groans; 1265
 Then, glancing at his Sire, he thus bemoans.
 O *Jove*, where is that cruel Hand, which aims
 The forked Bolt, and lanches livid Flames,
 My Cradle once?—*Sol* for those Mansions sighs,
 Which erst he gave to *Cadmus*, as a Prize. 1270
 His equal Love sad *Hercules* extends
 To both, and doubts, whilst yet his Bow he bends;

v. 1261. *Mean time round Jove's bright Throne*] Statius gives the Greeks the same auxiliary Deities as Homer does. In this Particular he has shewn great Judgment, but still greater, in not imitating the ridiculous Battle of the Gods, which characterises the Twenty-first Book of the Iliad.

v. 1269. *My Cradle once*] The Poet alludes to the supposed notion, that *Bacchus* was taken out of *Jupiter*'s Thigh.

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 v. 1288
 Lightning
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His Mother's * Birth-place *Perseus* much laments,
 And *Venus* for *Harmonia*'s People vents
 Her Grief in Tears: suspicious of her Spouse, 1275
 She stands aloof, and, wroth for broken Vows,
 In secret *Mars* regards.—The martial Dame
 On *Tyrian* Gods, audacious, casts the Blame :
 A furious Silence tortures *Juno*'s Breast,
 Yet nought avails to break th' Almighty's Rest; 1280
 Nay e'en the Strife had ceas'd, when in the Skies
 The Voice of *Capaneus* was heard.—He cries.—
 On Part of *Thebes* then no Immortals stand ;
 Where are the Natives of the guilty Land,
Bacchus and *Hercules*? — It gives me Shame 1285
 To challenge any of inferiour Name.
 Come, *Jove*, (for who's more worthy to engage?)
 Thy Harlot's threat'ned Ashes claim thy Rage :
 Come, gather all thy Lightning to the Blow,
 And plunge me flaming to the Shades below: 1290
 Abler perchance the timid Sea to scare.
 With empty Sound, and unavailing Glare,
 Or wreak thy Spite on *Cadmus*' bridal Bed. —
 The Gods deep groan'd, yet nought in Rev'rence said.
 Th' Eternal, smiling at his Rashness, shakes 1295
 The Honours of his Head, and thus bespeaks.
 Survives then mortal Pride dire *Phlegra*'s Fight,
 And wilt thou too my flumbring Wrath excite ?
 This hear'd, the Pow'rs eternal prompt his Hand
 Long-ling'ring, and his vengeful Darts demand : 1300

* *Argos*.

v. 1288. *Thy Harlot's threat'ned Ashes*] *Semele*, who was burnt by Lightning. Her Ashes were preserved in an Urn, and held in great Veneration by the *Thebans*.

Nor now the Partner of imperial State,
Saturnia, durst resist the Will of Fate.

His regal Dome in *Empyreal Heav'n*
Spontaneous thunders, ere a Sign was giv'n.
The Show's collect, the clashing Clouds are join'd
In Conflict fierce, without one Blast of Wind: 1306
You'd think, *Iapetus* had broke his Chain,
Or fell *Typhæus* was releas'd again,
Inarime, and *Ætna* rear'd on high.

Th' immortals blush to fear, but when they spy 1310
In mid-way Air an Earth-born Warrior stand
Oppos'd to *Jove*, and the mad Fight demand;
Th' unwonted Scene in Silence they admire,
And doubt, if he'll employ th' ethereal Fire.
Now 'gan the Pole just o'er th' *Ogygian Tow'r* 1315
To thunder, Prelude of Almighty Pow'r,
And Heav'n was ravish'd from each mortal Eye:
Yet still he grasps the Spires, he can't descry;
And, oft as Gleams shone thro' the breaking Cloud,
This Flash comes opportune (he cries aloud) 1320
To wrap proud *Thebes* in Fire: at my Demand
'Twas sent to wake anew my smould'ring Brand.
While thus he spake, the Lord of all above
Bar'd his right Arm, and all his Thunder drove:
Dispers'd in ambient Air, his Plumes upflew, 1325
And his Shield falls, discolour'd to the View;
And now his manly Members all lie bare:
Both Hosts, astounded at the dazzling Glare,
Recede, left, rushing with his whelming Weight,
And flaming Limbs, he hasten on their Fate. 1330
His Helmet, Hair and Torch now hiss within,
And from the Touch quick shrinks his shudd'ring Skin;

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He shoves his Mail away, amaz'd to feel
Beneath his Breast the Cinders of the Steel,
And places full against the hated Wall

1335

His smoking Bosom, left, half-burnt, he fall.

At length, his earthly Part resolv'd away,
The Spirit quits it's Prison-House of Clay ;
And, had his hardy Corse consum'd more slow,
He might have well deserv'd a second Blow.

1340

v. 1340. *He might have well deserv'd*] I cannot conclude my Notes on this Book, without taking some Notice of the Explois of *Capaneus*, which make in my Opinion the finest Part not only of this Book, but of the whole Work. There is great Strength of Imagination and an animated Turn of Expression in it, which must engage every one, who admires the Flights of an irregular and eccentric Genius. The Violence and Impetuosity of *Capaneus* is finely contrasted by the calm Consciousness of Superiority in *Jupiter*; but it may be observed, that as our Poet has elevated the Character of his Hero up to the Gods, so he has put that of the Gods upon a Level with Men : Witness that Hemistich,

Th' Immortals blush to fear.

This, however, is not the Fault of *Statius* in particular, but of all the Authors, who have introduced Machinery in their Poems.

THE GREAT PITTAGE & TAXES

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T H E

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE ELEVENTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Greeks being disheartened by the Death of Capaneus, the Thebans make a great Slaughter of them. Tisiphone persuades her Sister Megæra to assist her in forwarding the Duel between the two Brothers. Jupiter calls a Council of the Gods, and advises them to retire from the Sight of the Combate. Tisiphone goes in quest of Polynices, and by her Machinations prevails on him to challenge his Rival. He informs Adraustus of his Intention, whose Attempts to deter him from it are frustrated by the Fury. Eteocles returns Thanks to Jupiter for his Victory by a Sacrifice, which is attended with several inauspicious Omens. Apytus bears the Challenge to the King. His Courtiers dissuade him from accepting it, but Creon insolently insists on it. Jocasta uses her Interest with him to binder the Congress. Antigone addresses Polynices to the same Purpose, and would have gained her Point, had not the Fury interposed. They engage. Adraustus endeavouring in vain to part them, retreats to Argos. Piety descends from Heaven to the same Effect, but is repulsed by Tisiphone. Polynices overcomes Eteocles; but attempting to strip him of his Arms receives a mortal Wound. They both expire. Oedipus laments over their Bodies, and endeavours to kill himself, as does Jocasta, who is prevented by Ismene. Creon usurps the Crown, and prohibits the Burial of the dead Bodies. He then threatens to banish Oedipus who loads him with a Volley of Imprecations: Antigone intercedes and procures his Pardon. The Remains of the confederate Army decamp by Night, and fly to Adraustus's Dominions.

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THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE ELEVENTH.

WHEN dying *Capaneus* had now suppress'd
 The daring Fury of his impious Breast,
 And the vindictive Bolt, well-pleas'd to prove
 Its Pow'r obsequious to the Will of *Jove*,
 Spent on the Walls the Remnant of its Force, 5
 And to the blasted Earth pursu'd its Course;
 The Thunderer withholds his vengeful Hand,
 Recalls the Day, and spares the guilty Land;

Among all the Books of the *Thebaid* there is none in which the Poet has conducted that Part which concerns the marvellous with greater Art und Address. The Intrigue of the Furies to procure a Duel between the two Rivals has something in it pleasingly terrible. Add to this the Spirit and Propriety of the several Speeches, among which those of *Eteocles*, *Polynices*, *Antigone* and *Oedipus* are Master-Pieces in their Kind, and inimitably beautiful. But, bating these Perfections, which characterize it in particular, the Subject and Matter of it in general is too interesting not to require a double Degree of Attention in perusing it. We see in the Conclusion of it poetical Justice administered with great Impartiality and Propriety; and the grand End of the Poem answered, which was the showing the ill Effects of Ambition, exemplified in the Death of the two Brothers. We are only therefore to look upon the twelfth Book as an ornamental Supplement, as the Poem might have ended here without violating the Laws of the *Epopœia*.

While

While from their Thrones sublime the Gods arise,
And hail with Shouts the Monarch of the Skies. 10
As when from *Phlegra* conq'ring he return'd,
And crush'd *Enceladus* his Anger mourn'd.
But *Capaneus*, consign'd to deathless Fame
For Acts, which *Jove* chastiz'd, but durst not blame,
Retains the Frowns which Death could not efface, 15
Whilst his huge Arms a shatter'd Tow'r embrace.
As *Tityus*, Monster of enormous Size,
Stretch'd o'er nine Acres near *Avernus* lies ;
Whose Giant-Limbs if chance the Birds survey,
They start, and trembling quit th' immortal Prey ; 20
While still his fruitful Fibres spring again,
Swell, and renew the bold Offender's Pain.
Thus groan'd the Plain beneath th' oppressive Load,
And with bright Flames of livid Sulphur glow'd.
Now paus'd the Battle ; and the chosen Train 25
Of weeping Suplicants quit each hallow'd Fane.
Here all their Vows, here all their Sorrows cease,
And each fond Mother's Pray'r is hush'd in Peace.

v. 11. *Phlegra*] *Phlegra* was a City of *Macedonia*, where the Giants fought the Gods. It is situated under Mount *Pindus*.

v. 17 *As Tityus*] *Lucretius* has beautifully explained the Fable of *Tityus* according to its allegorical Sense.

Nec Tityon volucres ineunt Acheronte jacentem ;
Nec, quod sub magno scrutetur pectore, quidquam
Perpetuam ætatem poterunt reperire profecto,
Quamlibet immani projectu corporis existet,
Qui non sola novem dispersis jugera membris,
Obtineat, sed qui terrai totius orbem :
Non tamen æternum poterit perferrre dolorem,
Nec præbere cibum proprio de corpore semper ;
Sed Tityos hic est nobis in amore jacentem
Quem volucres lacerant, atque exest anxius Angor ;
Aut aliâ quâvis scindunt Cuppedine curæ.

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Mean while the *Greeks* in broken Squadrons yield,
 And to their Victor-Foes resign the Field. 30
 They fear not human Threats, or hostile Darts,
 But angry *Jove* unmans their drooping Hearts.
 His Thunder-Storms still dwell upon their Ears,
 And fancy'd Lightnings cleave the starry Spheres.
 He seems himself to press the flying Band, 35
 And launch his Bolts with unremitting Hand.
 The *Theban* Monarch, eager to improve
 The fair Occasion proffer'd him by *Jove*,
 Pricks onward to the Rout, and o'er the Mead
 With goring Spurs impells his foaming Steed. 40
 Thus when the royal Savage gorg'd with Food,
 Retires, th' inferior Natives of the Wood
 Bears, Wolves, and spotted Lynxes haste away
 To seize the scanty Relics of his Prey,

v. 33. *His Thunder-Storms*] Any Noise or Sight that makes a deep Impression on us, affects our Organs of Sensation, as it were by a Kind of Echo, long after the Object is removed. It is thus we see *Adam* affected after the Angel's Relation.

The Angel ended, and in *Adam's* Ear
 So charming left his Voice, that he awhile
 Thought him still speaking. *Par. Loft*, B. 8. L. 1.

It is thus we must account for the seeming Inconsistency in the following Verses of *Homer*.

"Ητοι ὅτ' εἰς πεδίον τὸ τρωϊκὸν αἰθρῆσει,
 Θαύμαζεν πυρὰ πολλὰ, τὰ καίστο Ιλιόθι πρὸ,
 Αὐτῶν, συρίγγων τὸ ἐνοπήν, ὅμαδὸν τὸ ἀνθεώπων. B. 10.

or as *Aristotle* answers a Criticism of some Censurers of *Homer* on this Place. who asked, how it was that *Agamemnon*, shut up in his Tent in the Night, could see the *Trojan* Camp at one View, and the Fleet at another, as the Poet represents it? *Το δὲ κατα μεταφοραν ειπειν* (says he) that is, tis only a metaphorical Manner of Speech; *To cast one's Eye*, means but to reflect upon, or to revolve in one's Mind; and that employed *Agamemnon's* Thoughts in his Tent, which had been the chief Object of his Sight the Day before.

Eury-

Eurymedon succeeds, who Weapons bore 45
 Of Form uncouth, and rustic Armour wore ;
 Pan was his boasted Sire : like him he courts
 A modest Fame, and shines in rural Sports.
 Next came Alatreus, flush'd with early Fire,
 And matching, while a Boy, his youthful Sire. 50
 Thrice happy both, but far more envy'd he,
 Whom Fate adorn'd with such a Progeny.
 Their Years unequal, equal their Renown,
 By both with equal Strength the Dart was thrown.
 Where the deep Trench in Length extended lay, 55
 Compacted Troops stand wedg'd in firm Array.
 Alas ! how fickle is the God of Fight !
 How vain, oppos'd to Heav'n, is human might !
 The Greeks, who late the Walls of Cadmus scal'd,
 In Turn behold with Grief their Tents assaile'd. 60
 As driving Clouds before a Whirlwind fly,
 And break and scatter thro' the ruffled Sky ;

v. 61. *As driving Clouds*] As some Critics have objected against
 heaping Comparisons one upon another, to prevent any Prejudices
 which the unwary Reader may form, we shall lay before him Mr.
 Pope's Defence of the following Verses of Homer.

Οὐτε θαλασσῆς κυριος τοσον βοσκει ποτι χερσον,
 Παυτόδεν οργυμένον πνοιη βορεω αλεγεινη.
 Οὐτε πυρος τοσος γε ποτι βρομο αιδορδροο,
 Ουρεος εν βιοσης, ετε τ' αρετο κακεμεν υλην.
 Οὐτ' ανεμο τοσοντε ποτι δρυσιν υψιλομοιον
 Ηπυει, οει μελισα μεγα βρεμεται χαλεπαινων.

In this Case (says he) the principal Image is more strongly im-
 pressed on the Mind by a Multiplication of Similes, the natural
 Product of an Imagination labouring to express something vast :
 but finding no single Idea sufficient to answer its Conceptions, it
 endeavours, by redoubling the Comparisons, to supply this De-
 fect. The different Sounds of Waters, Winds and Flames, being
 as it were united in one. We have several Instances of this Sort
 even in so castigated and reserved a Writer as *Virgil*, who has
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As angry Billows leave the rocky Strand,
 And now disclose, and now o'erwhelm the Sand ;
 Or when on *Ceres* southern Gusts descend, 65
 Before the Blast the nodding Harvests bend :
 Thus fall the rough *Tyrinthian* Youths beneath
 The Scythe of Death, who like *Alcides*, sheath
 Their Limbs in savage Trophies. From on high
 Their Patron views their hapless Destiny, 70
 And pities, as he marks their shaggy Spoils,
 Memorials of his own illustrious Toils.
Enipeus, urg'd by some unfriendly Pow'r,
 O'erlook'd the Conflict from a *Grecian* Tow'r ;
 Of either Army none was more renown'd 75
 The Warrior-Trumpet in the Field to sound :

joined together the Images of this Passage in the fourth *Georgic*,
 and applied them, beautifully softened by a Kind of Parody, to
 the Buzzing of a Bee-hive.

Frigidus ut quondam sylvis immurmurat Auster,
 Ut mare sollicitum stridet refluentibus undis,
 Aestuat ut clausis rapidus fornacibus ignis. v. 261.

Tasso has not only imitated this particular Passage of *Homer*, but
 likewise added to it. Canto 9. Sianza 22.

Rapido si che torbida procella
 Da' cavernosi monti esce piu tarda :
 Fiume, ch' arbori insieme, e case svella :
 Folgore, che le torri abbatta, & arda :
 Terremoto, che'l mondo empia d'orrore,
 Son picciole sembianze al suo furore.

v. 76. *The Warrior-Trumpet*] *Statius* has been blamed by some
 ingenious Philologists for confounding the Manners of the Times
 he wrote of, with those of the Times he lived in, by introducing
 a Trumpeter upon the Stage. They quote *Eustathius* and *Didymus*, to prove that the Use of that Instrument was not known during
 the *Theban* War. But with Deference to their superior Abilities,
 we must beg Leave to observe, that the Testimony of the Poet is
 much more valid than that of the abovementioned Authors, as he
 lived

But while, an Advocate for speedy Flight,
 He sounded a Retreat from adverse Fight,
 Hurl'd by some envious Foe, a whizzing Spear
 Transfix'd his Hand, and nail'd it to his Ear: 80
 Nor ceas'd the Clarion, when the Hand of Death
 Impos'd a Truce, and Fate suppress'd his Breath,
 But, to th' Amazement of the list'ning Throngs,
 Th' unvary'd soothing Strain a while prolongs.
 Mean Time the Fiend, embolden'd by Success, 85
 And pleas'd to view the *Grecian* Hosts' Distress,
 Thinks nothing done, till fir'd with mutual Rage,
 The Rival-Kings in impious Fight engage.
 And left, unaided, her Attempts should fail,
 When Force combin'd might easily prevail, 90
Megæra Partner of her Toils she makes,
 And summons to the Charge her kindred Snakes.
 For this a Passage with her *Stygian* Blade
 In a lone Valley for her Voice she made;
 And mutters Words, that shook the Depth of Hell, 95
 And rous'd the Fury from her gloomy Cell:

lived nearer those Times, and consequently had a better Opportunity of making Researches and Enquiries. *Virgil* has likewise introduced it as used in the *Trojan* War, which was not long after that of *Thebes*, and the sacred Writers make mention of them very frequently in their History of Ages at least as early as this.

v. 81. *Nor ceas'd the Clarion*] The Hint of this beautiful Circumstance seems taken from the Description of *Orpheus*'s Death in the fourth Book of the *Georgics*.

Tum quoque marmoreâ caput a cervice revulsum,
 Gurgite cum medio portans Oeagrius Hebrus
 Volveret, Eurydicen vox ipsa et frigida lingua,
 Ah miseram Eurydicen, animâ fugiente, vocabat.

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Then a loud-hissing horned Snake she rears,
 Conspicuous midst the matted Tuft of Hairs :
 Earth groans disparting at the dreadful Sound,
Olympus trembles, and the Deepes rebound ; 100
 While, wak'd to sudden Wrath, th' ethereal Sire
 Demands his Bolts, and threatens the World with Fire.
 Her Comrade at the distant Summons shook,
 As near her Parent's Side her Stand she took :
 While *Capaneus* harangues th' assembled Ghosts, 105
 And loud Applauses rend the *Stygian* Coasts.
 Swift from the baleful Regions of the dead
 Th' ascending Monster bar'd her horrid Head.
 The Shades rejoice : the circling Clouds give Way,
 And Hell exults with unexpected Day. 110
 Her Sister flew to meet her, swift as Wind ;
 And thus unfolds the Purpose of her Mind.
 Thus far our Father's harsh Commands I've borne,
 Alone on Earth, expos'd to Mortals' Scorn,
 While you, exempt from War and hostile Rage, 115
 The pliant Ghosts with gentle Sway assuage :
 Nor are my Hopes deceiv'd, or Labours vain ;
 Witness this crimson Stream, and reeking Plain :
 To me dread *Pluto* owes the num'rous Shades,
 That swarm in *Styx*, and the *Lethæan* Glades. 120

v. 97. *Then a]* The Cerafes has Horns like a Ram's, and a very small Body. It was probably from this Description *Milton* took the Hint of the following Verses.

But on they roll'd in Heaps, and up the Trees
 Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky Locks
 That curl'd *Megæra* : *Par. Lost*, B. 10. V. 558.

v. 113. *Thus]* One cannot sufficiently admire the Fire, Spirit, and Propriety of this Oration, and with what Art the Character of the Fury *Tisiphone* is supported.

These

These are my Triumphs, this the dire Success
 Acquir'd by Toils, and purchas'd with Distress.
 Let *Mars* command the Fates of either Host;
 'Tis not of vulgar Deaths alone I boast:
 Ye saw (for sure his Figure must command 125
 Your Notice, as he stalk'd along the Strand)
 A martial Chief, whose Terror-breathing Face
 And Hands black Streams of lukewarm Gore disgrace,
 Inspir'd by me, on human Flesh he fed,
 And with his Teeth defac'd the Victor's Head. 130
 Ye heard (for Nature felt the Thunder-Shock,
 That might have riv'd an Adamantine Rock)
 When *Jove* in all his Terrors fate array'd,
 And summon'd all the Godhead to his Aid,
 To wreak his Vengeance on a Son of Earth, 135
 I smil'd, - for such a Scene provok'd my Mirth.
 But now (for ever unreferv'd and free
 I trust the Secrets of my Soul to thee)
 My Hands refuse the blunted Torch to rear,
 And the tir'd Serpents loath this upper Air. 140
 But thou, whose Rage as yet entire remains,
 Whose snaky Tire its wonted Health retains;
 Thy Forces join, and all my Labours share,
 For Schemes like these demand our utmost Care.
 Faint as I seem, from Toil I shall not breathe, 145
 Till the two Brother-Kings their Swords unsheathe.
 On this I stand resolv'd, tho' Nature plead,
 And start recoiling at th' accursed Deed.
 Great is the Task, then let us steel our Hearts
 With Rage, and act with Vigour each our Parts. 150

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Whence these Delays? for once forget to spare,
And choose the Standards you prefer to bear.

They both are tutor'd ready to our Hands,
And, fir'd by Discord, wait but our Commands.

Yet will, I fear, *Antigone* prevail, 155

And with her artful Conduct turn the Scale,
Or *Oedipus*, whose importuning Pray'r
Experience tells us oft has urg'd to spare.

Oft is he seen from Converse to retire,
In secret weep, and act again the Sire. 160

For this my bold Excursion I postpone
To *Thebes*, despairing to succeed alone.

Then let the banish'd Prince your Cares engage,
Lest Length of Time o'ercome his less'ning Rage.

But most beware, lest mild *Adrastus* sway 165

His youthful Mind, and interrupt the Fray.

Their Parts assign'd, the Sister-Furies sped
Each diff'rent Ways, as their Engagements led.

As when two Winds from adverse Quarters try
With equal Lungs their Titles to the Sky, 170

Beneath the Blast the Waves and Woods resound,
And one mishapen Waste deforms the Ground.

v. *And choose the Standards*] The Meaning of this is, choose whether you will inspirit *Eteocles* or *Polynices* to the Combat.

v. 169. *As when*] The Winds perhaps have been the Subject of more Comparisons than any one Thing in Nature. *Homer*, *Virgil*, and the greatest Geniuses of ancient and modern Times abound in them, out of which the following comes nearest our Author's.

Adversi rupto ceu quondam turbine venti
Confligunt, Zephyrusque Notusque & Iætus Eois
Eurus equis, stridunt sylvæ: fævitque tridenti
Spumeus, atque imo Nereus ciet æquora fundo. *Aen.* B. 2.

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Acquir'd by Toils, and purchas'd with Distress.
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For Schemes like these demand our utmost Care.
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The mourning Hinds their various Loss deplore,
Yet thank that Lot which kept them safe on Shore.
When *Jove*, enthron'd in open Air, survey'd 175
The Day polluted with a double Shade,
While murky Spots obscur'd the low'ring Skies.
And *Phæbus* :—sternly to the Gods he cries.
We saw the Furies impious Combate wage,
And brook'd, while Moderation check'd their Rage:
Though one to Fight unequal durst aspire, 181
And fell the Victim of celestial Ire.
But Deeds approach, as yet on Earth unknown,
For which the Tears of Ages can't atone.
O turn your Eyes, nor let the Gods survey 185
The fatal Horrors of this guilty Day.
Sufficient was the Specimen, I ween,
When *Sol*, disgusted at the Rites obscene
Of impious *Tantalus*, recall'd his Light;
And now again ye mourn a sudden Night. 190
Great as the Crime appears at Mercy's Pray'r
The Tenants both of Heav'n and Earth I spare.
But Heav'n forbid, *Astræa*'s chaster Eye,
Or the fair Twins such hellish Acts descry.
The Thund'rer spoke, and as he turn'd away, 195
A sudden Gloom o'erwhelm'd th' inverted Day.
Mean while the Virgin Daughter of the Night
Seeks *Polynices* thro' the Ranks of Fight.

v. 195. *And as he turn'd, &c.*] This Fiction of *Jupiter*'s turning away his Eyes is borrowed from the following Lines in the 16th Book of *Homer*.

The God, his Eyes averting from the Plain,
Laments his Son, predestin'd to be slain,
Far from the *Lycian* Shores, his native Reign. }

Pope's Iliad.
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Beneath the Gate the musing Chief she found,
For various Omens did his Soul confound. 200
Yet unresolv'd to tempt his doubtful Fate,
And in a Duel end the stern Debate.
He saw, as roaming in the Gloom of Night
Along the Trench he ponder'd on the Fight,
Argia's Image pensive and forlorn, 205
Her Torches broken, and her Tresses torn.
(For *Jove*'s all-gracious Will had thus decreed
To warn him of the near-approaching Deed)
In vain the Warrior importun'd to tell
The Motive of her Flight, and what befell : 210
Nought to the tender Question she replies,
But from his Sight, the Tears fast-falling, flies.
Yet well, too well he guess'd the fatal Cause,
That his fair Consort from *Mycenæ* draws,
Discerns the dire Prediction of his Death, 215
And trembles, to resign his vital Breath.
But when the Goddess thrice her Scourge had ply'd,
And smote the Mail that glitter'd on his Side ;
He raves, he burns with Fury not his own,
Nor seeks so much to mount the *Theban* Throne, 220
As o'er his slaughter'd Brother to expire
At length he thus accosts his aged Sire.
Too late, O best of Fathers, I've decreed
In single Fight to conquer or to bleed,

v. 223. *Too late*] This Speech of *Polynices* is not without its particular Graces. There is an Air of Majesty and Greatness that dignifies the whole ; and the beautiful Confusion and Irregularity that it displays is excellently adapted to the Circumstances of the Speaker. In the Beginning of it he blames himself for not preventing the vast Effusion of Blood by a single Combat with his Brother *Eteocles*. He then artfully sounds *Adrastus* concerning his

532 STATIUS's THEBAID. Book XI.

When only I of all my Peers survive, 225
 For nought but Misery condemn'd to live.
 O had I thus determin'd, ere the Plain
 Yet whiten'd with the Bones of Thousands slain,
 Rather than see the Flow'r of *Argos* fall,
 And royal Blood begrime the guilty Wall. 230
 Say, was it just, I should ascend the Throne,
 Thro' which so many widow'd Cities moan.
 Yet since too late the Wreaths of Praise I claim,
 Revenge shall prompt, and act the Part of Fame.
 Say, can one Spark of Pity warm thy Breast 255
 For him who robb'd thy antient Limbs of Rest,
 For him, by whose unhappy Conduct led,
 And in whose Cause so many Chiefs have bled.
 This well thou know'st, tho' willing to conceal
 My shameless Actions thro' paternal Zeal. 240
 O had I dy'd, ere to these Walls I fled ;
 But wreak thy Vengeance on my guilty Head.
 To single Combat I my Brother dare.
 'Tis thus resolv'd. For Fight I now prepare.
 Nor thou dissuade : for by almighty *Jove* 245
 Thy Pray'rs and Tears must ineffectual prove.
 Should e'en my Parents, half dissolv'd in Tears,
 Or Sisters rush between our clashing Spears,
 And fondly strive to check my furious Course,
 They strive in vain : for vain are Art and Force. 250
 Say, shall I drink the little that remains
 Of *Grecian* Blood, and waste it on the Plains ?

Affection, with a View to the Request he afterwards makes. In short, our Author has approved himself no less skilful in moving the Passions than in describing the more tumultuous Scenes of War, and Devastation.

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v. 27
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I saw, unmov'd, th' unclosing Earth give Way,
And snatch the Prophet from the Realms of Day.

I saw the Blood of gen'rous *Tydeus* spilt, 255
A more than equal Partner of his Guilt.

In vain th' *Arcadian* Queen and *Tegea* raves,
While this her Son, and that her Monarch craves.

Why fell I not like bold *Hippomedon*,
Surcharg'd with martial Wreaths and Trophies won.

Why durst I not, like *Capaneus*, engage,
And mingle mortal with immortal Rage ?

What coward Terrors check my trembling Hand ?

Avaunt.—I give the Justice ye demand.

Here let the childless Matron, hoary Sire, 285
And youthful Widow, flush'd with am'rous Fire,
With all, whose Joys I crop'd before the Time,
Convene, and curse me for the fatal Crime.

Here let them stand Spectators of the Fray,
And for my Foe with Hands uplifted pray. 270

And now, my Spouse, and all that's dear, adieu ;
Nor thou, O King, beyond the Grave pursue
Thy Vengeance ; nor to us alone impute

The Guilt, which Heav'n partakes ; but grant my Suit,
And rescue from my conq'ring Brother's Ire 275
My last Remains.—This only I require.

O may thy Daughter happier Nuptials prove,
And bless a Chief more worthy of her Love.

He paus'd ; and manly Tears their Cheeks o'erflow ;
Thus, when returning Spring dissolves the Snow, 280

v. 279. *He paus'd*] Ariosto has imitated this Simile in the 36th
Canto of his *Orlando furioso*. Stanza 40.

Come a meridional tiepidi venti,

Of *Hæmus* nothing save the Name remains,
And *Rhodope* sinks level with the Plains.
To calm his Passion with the Words of Age,
And moderate his now-redoubled Rage,
Essay'd *Adraſtus*; but the *Stygian Queen* 285
Broke off his Speech with a terrific Scene.
A winged Steed, and fatal Arms she brought;
And left he lag, to sudden Pity wrought;
A polish'd Helm she fix'd upon his Head,
And thus, in Aspect like *Perinthus*, said. 290
No more Delays.—The Object of thy Hate,
(As Fame informs us) issues from the Gate.—
The Fiend prevails, and mounting him by Force,
With Joy beholds him take the wish'd-for Course:
Pale as a Spectre, o'er the Plain he flies, 295
And her dire Shadow, looking round, descries.
In vain the *Theban* Leader sought to prove
His Gratitude to Cloud-compelling *Jove*
By sacred Honors.—The celestial Sire
Unheeding sees the curling Fumes aspire. 300
Nor to the Fane one Deity descends;
Tisiphone alone the Rites attends.
Amid the Croud she stands, and wafts his Vows
From *Jove* to *Proserpine*'s tremendous Spouse.

Che spirano dal mare il fiato caldo;
Le nevi si dissolvono e i torrenti,
E'l ghiaccio, che pur dianzi era se saldo:

v. 285. *But the Stygian Queen*] The Introduction of the Fury *Tisiphone* as the Authoress of the Duel is imitated from the seventh Book of the *Æneid*, where *Aleſto* is engaged in almost the same ill-laudable Office. And perhaps after the Reader has well weighed the two Passages together, and observed with what Art the Machinery is conducted by our Poet, he will not think the Copy much inferior to the Original.

Q thou

O thou, from whom (though envying *Argos*, boast 305
Saturnia's Presence on her favour'd Coast)
 We sprung, a Race of Origin divine,
 What Time, a Votary to *Cupid's* Shrine,
 Great *Jove* was seen in less than human Shape,
 Our Orgies interrupted by the Rape, 510
 Whilst on thy Back the cheated Fair-one rode,
 Unconscious of th' Embraces of a God.
 Nor only then (if we may credit Fame)
 Wert thou enamour'd of a *Theban* Dame.
 At length our Walls have prov'd thy grateful Sense
 Of ancient Services: as in Defence 515
 Of thy own Heav'n the vengeful Thunders roll'd,
 Such as our Sires with Horror heard of old.
 Accept these Off'rings then, thy Mercies claim,
 Nor let in vain the votive Altars flame. 520
 Let these suffice.—Our best Endeavours prove
 A trivial Recompence for heav'nly Love.
 To *Bacchus* and *Alcides* we resign
 This Office, where tis their's alone to shine.
 He paus'd; when bursting forth with sable Glare, 525
 The Flames invade his Diadem and Hair.

v. 313. *Nor only their*] The Lady here hinted at is *Semele*, to whom he alludes in the following Verse.

* Such as our Sires with Horror heard of old.*

v. 325. *When bursting*] This ominous Incident seems taken from *Virgil*, who says in his seventh *Aeneid*.

Præterea castis adolet dum altaria tædis,
 Et juxta genitorem astat Lavinia virgo:
 Visa nefas, longis comprehendere crinibus ignem,
 Atque omnem ornatum flammâ crepitante cremari,
 Regalesque accensa comas, accensa coronam
 Insignem gemmis: tum fumida lumine fulvo
 Involvi, ac totis Vulcanum spargere tectis.

V. 71.
The

The Victim then, uninjur'd by the Wound,
 With bloody Foam distain'd the sacred Ground,
 At the bright Altar aim'd a furious Stroke,
 And thro' th' opposing Crowd impetuous broke. 330
 Forth from the Fane the pale Attendants spring,
 And the sage Augur scarce consoles the King.
 At length he issues Orders to renew
 The Rites, and screens his Fears from public View.
 Thus *Hercules*, when first he felt the Pains 335
 Of the slow Poison raging in his Veins,
 Patient awhile his Part at th' Altar bore :
 Then, as his Anguish grew at ev'ry Pore,
 Gave Vent to Groans that pierc'd the pitying Skies,
 And wildly left th' unfinish'd Sacrifice. 340
 Whilst anxious Cares perplex his tortur'd Mind,
 Young *Ægyptus* (his Porter's Charge assign'd
 To Substitutes less swift of Foot) drew near,
 And, panting, thus salutes the royal Ear.
 O wave these Rites, ye solemnize in vain ; 345
 Nor let such Cares withhold you from the Plain.

v. 335. *Thus Hercules*] I believe most of my Readers are acquainted with the History of this Affair : and therefore shall make no Apology for referring those who are not to *Seneca*, who has written a Play on this Subject, entitled *Hercules Oetaeus*.

v. 345. *O wave these Rites*] From the Beginning of this Speech to the Close of the Book there is a constant Succession of all the Graces of Poetry. The pleasing and terrible, the sublime and the pathetic are here work'd up to Perfection, and shewn in their proper Colours. They not only force the Reader's Attention, but Admiration. The Distress is here wound up to its highest Pitch, and the Characters of *Eteocles*, *Polynices*, *Antigone* and *Oedipus* admirably supported. The Reader will I hope excuse this and other Sallies of Enthusiasm, it is but natural for a Translator to have some Predilection for his Author, which may sometimes transport

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When Groves of hostile Spears beset our Gates,
Our Fate depends on Action, not Debates.
Thy Foe, O Monarch, thunders at the Walls;
And thee to combate, thee alone he calls. 350
His Comrades turn away, and while he speaks,
Sighs heave each Breast, and Tears bedew their Cheeks.
His Army vent their Murmurs to the Skies;
At length in Agony of Grief he cries,
Say, why was guiltless *Capaneus* destroy'd, 355
Here rather be thy Bolts, O *Jove*, employ'd?
In the King's Breast now Fear and Anger wage
A short-liv'd War, but soon are lost in Rage.
Thus when the Victor-Bull hears from afar
His exil'd Rival hast'ning to the War, 360
He stalks, exulting in collected Might.
Foams with Excess of Rage, and hopes the Fight:
His Heels the Sand, his goring Horns provoke
The passive Air with many a well-aim'd Stroke.

a young critic, too far. It is hop'd however that Men of Taste will acknowledge that *Statius* in this Book deserves an high degree of Praise and Admiration.

v. 359. *Thus when, &c.*] The Reader may compare this with the following Simile from *Tasso*.

Non altramente il Tauro, ove l'irriti
Gelofo amor con stimuli pungenti,
Horribilmente mugge, e co' muggiti
Gli spiriti in se risveglia, e l'ire ardenti,
E'l corno aguzza ai tronchi, e par, ch' inviti
Con vani colpi alla battaglia i venti,
Sparge co'l piè l'arena, e'l suo rivale
Da lunge sfida à guerra aspra, e mortale.

Gierus. C. 7. St. 55.

While

538 STATIUS's THEBAID. Book XI.

While the fair Herd, with anxious Horror mute, 365
 Expect the Issue of the stern Dispute,
 Nor were they wanting, who the King befriend ;
 Let him his empty Wrath, unheeded, spend
 On these our Walls : nor wonder, shou'd he dare
 E'en greater Things, when prompted by Despair. 370
 In rash Exploits, and fruitless Schemes t' engage,
 Is the last Effort of declining Rage.
 Rest thou secure, and trust to us alone,
 Whose Arms shall guard thee on the well-earn'd Throne.
 At thy Command all *Thebes* shall arm again : 375
 Thus spake of Sycophants th' encircling Train.
 But *Creon* took Advantage of the Times,
 To tell the Monarch of his num'rous Crimes.
 A Spirit yet untam'd and uncontrol'd
 With Grief for brave Menæceus made him bold. 380
 No Rest he knows : alike are Day and Night.
 His Son is ever present to his Sight.
 Still he beholds him falling from the Tow'r,
 While his torn Breast emits a bloody Show'r.
 As still the Monarch on the Challenge mus'd : 385
 Dar'd not accept it, nor had yet refus'd :
 He cries. —— O Tyrant insolent and base !
 Employ'd by Heav'n to plague a guilty Race,

v. 387. O Tyrant] Notwithstanding the great Character of *Drances*'s Invective in the 11th Book of the *Aeneid*, this of *Creon* may at least bear to be compar'd with it. If the former is full of Spirited Satire and humorous Sarcasms, the latter is no less so, to which are superadded some fine Strokes of the *Pathos*, which the Subject of *Drances*'s Speech would not admit of. But as general Remarks are less convincing than Particulars, we shall confront some parallel Passages.

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v. 39

v. 40
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No longer hope the *Thebans* to command, 390
 And meanly conquer by another's Hand.
 No longer shalt thou here in soft Repose
 Insult our Fears, and triumph in our Woes.
 Too long beneath the Wrath of *Jove* we've groan'd,
 And for another's Perjuries aton'd.
 No longer *Thebes* her treasur'd Wealth can boast, 395
 Her youthful Warriors, and well-peopled Coast :
 So few are left, that shou'dst thou longer sway,
 Slaves wou'd be even wanted to obey.
 Some hath *Ismenos* wafted to the Deep,
 And some, depriv'd of fun'ral Honors, sleep 400
 While others seek their Limbs dispers'd around,
 Or prove their Art on many a mortal Wound.
 Restore our Brothers, Sires, and Sons their own,
 Nor let our desert Fields and Houses moan.
 Say, why is *Dryas* absent now so long, 405
Eubœa's Leaders, and the *Phocian* Throng ?
 Yet them th' impartial Arbiter of Fight
 Consign'd to Mansions of eternal Night.
 But thou, my Son, as worthy that alone,
 Hast fallen to secure the Tyrant's Throne, 410

v. 393. *Too long*] So *Virgil*.

O Latio caput horum & causa malorum !
 Pone animos, & pulsus abi : sat funera fusi
 Vidimus, ingentes & desolavimus agros.

v. 399. *Some hath Ismenos*]

Nos, animæ viles, inhumata, infletaque Turba,
 Sternamur campis.

v. 407. *Yet them*] The Transition from the Death of the other
 Heroes to that of his Son is very artfully conducted, and merits
 the highest Applause from all Lovers of the pathetic.

Devoted

Devoted as the First-fruits of the War.

To *Mars*, a Sacrifice the Gods abhor.

And shall our King (O Scandal to the Name)

Delay when challeng'd to assert his Claim?

Or does *Tiresias* bid another go,

415

And basely frame new Oracles of Woe?

‘ For why should *Hæmon* ony longer live,

‘ And his more gen’rous Brother still survive?

Let him defend thy Right to kingly Pow’r

While thou may’st sit Spectator from the Tow’r. 420

Why dost thou murm’ring vent thy Threats in vain,

And look for Vengeance from this menial Train?

Not these alone, but they who gave thee Breath,

And e’en thy Sisters wish thy speedy Death.

Thy threat’ning Brother labours at the Gate;

425

Nor canst thou here much longer shun thy Fate

So long deserv’d. — Thus spoke th’ impassion’d Sire;

The King replies, inflam’d with equal Ire.

Think not, O Traytor, by this weak Pretence

To veil thy Hopes, and triumph o’er our Sense: 430

No Grief cou’d move thee for *Menæceus*’ Death

But rather Joy, he thus resign’d his Breath.

Fearing, thy impious Thoughts shou’d be descry’d,

Thou seek’st in Tears the swelling Joy to hide,

Thro’ vain Presumption, that if I shou’d fall,

435

Thou, as next Heir, must sway the regal Hall.

v. 413. *And shall our King]*

Et jam tu, si qua tibi vis,
Si patrii quid Martis habes, illum aspice contra
Qui vocat. —

Yet

Yet hope not, Fortune, adverse as she seems,
 Will second thee in these ambitious Schemes ;
 E'en now thy wretched Life is in my Hands,
 But first my Arms, my Arms, ye faithful Bands. 440
 While we're in Fight, thou, *Creon*, may'st assuage
 Thy Groans, and take Advantage of our Rage.
 Yet shou'd the Fortune of the Day be mine
 Immediate Death, vile Miscreant, shall be thine. *think*
 Thus spoke the Monarch, and his shining Sword, 445
 Drawn forth in Anger to the Sheath restor'd.
 Thus, when excited by a random Wound,
 The Snake on Spires erected, cleaves the Ground,
 And, fraught with Ire, from his whole Body draws
 A Length of Poison to his thirsty Jaws, 450
 If chance his Foe, unheeded, turns aside,
 His high wound Wrath is quickly pacified ;
 He drinks the Venom, which he wrought in vain,
 And his distended Neck subsides again.
 But when the sad *Jocasta* had receiv'd 455
 The dire Account, too hastily believ'd,
 Unmindful of her Sex, and ev'ry Care,
 She bar'd her bloody Breast, and rent her Hair.

v. 458. *She bar'd her bloody Breast*] The Speech of *Jocasta* opens with great Tenderness, and is preluded by Actions expressive of the highest Misery. The Circumstance in particular of showing that Breast to her Son, which had supported him in his Infancy, is (to use the Words of Mr. *Pope*) extremely moving. It is a silent Kind of Oratory, and prepares the Heart to listen by prepossessing the Eye in Favour of the Speaker. *Priam* and *Hecuba* are represented in much the same Condition, when endeavouring to dissuade their Son *Hector* from a single Combat with *Achilles*, though I must observe, in praise of our Author, that there is more Passion in *Jocasta*'s Speech, and the Contrast of Terror and Pity considerably more heightened.

As

542 STATIUS'S THEBAID. Book XI.

As when *Agave* climb'd the Mountain's Brow,
 To bring the promis'd Head (her impious Vow.) 460
 Such rush'd the Queen, distracted in her Mind,
 And left her Daughters, and her Slaves behind.
 Despair her Nerves with unknown Vigour strung,
 And Violence of Sorrow made her young,
 Meanwhile the Chief his graceful Helmet took, 465
 And in his Hand two pointed Javelins shook.
 When in his Mother rushes. At the Sight
 He and his Train grew Pale with wild Affright.
 He renders back in haste a proffer'd Dart,
 While thus she strives to work upon his Heart. 470
 Say, whence this Rage, and why so soon again
 The warring Furies quit their nether Reign?
 Was it so slight two adverse Hosts to lead,
 And fight by Proxy on th' ensanguin'd Mead?
 That nothing but a Duel can appease 475
 Your mutual Wrath, nor less than Murder please.
 Where will the Victor have Recourse for Rest,
 Say, will he court it on this slighted Breast?
 Thrice happy Spouse in this thy gloomy State!
 O had these Eyes but shar'd an equal Fate! 480
 And must I see? — Ah! whither dost thou turn
 Those Eyes that with revengeful Fury burn?
 What mean these Symptoms of a tortur'd Breast,
 Harsh-grinding Teeth, and Murmurs half supprest?
 Hop'st thou to see thy Mother overcome, 485
 First thou must try these odious Arms at home.
 I'll stop thee in the Threshold of the Gate,
 And, while I can, oppose the fell Debate.
 First thou shalt pierce, in Fullness of thy Rage,
 These Breasts, that fed thee in thy tender Age: 490

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While hurried on by thee, the furious Horse
Spurns my hoar Head, and tramples on my Corse.
Why dost thou thus repel me with thy Shield
Forbear, and to my just Intreaties yield.

No Honors to the Furies have I paid, 495
Nor against thee invok'd infernal Aid.

'Tis not stern *Oedipus*, thy vengeful Sire,
Thy Bliss, thy Welfare only I desire.
I ask thee but to halt awhile, and weigh
The Guilt and Dangers of th' intended Fray. 500
What tho' thy Brother summons thee to fight,
Presuming on imaginary Might ?

No Friend is near his Fury to restrain :
Thee all intreat, thee all intreat in vain.
Him to the Fight *Adraustus* may persuade, 505
Or should he check, scarce hopes to be obey'd.

Wilt thou then leave us here absorb'd in Woe,
To vent thy Anger on a Brother Foe ?
Nor did a Virgin's tender Fears withhold
The fair *Antigone*; but nobly bold 510
She rush'd amidst the Crowd, resolv'd to gain
The Wall, whose Height commands the subject Plain.
Old *Aetor* follows with unequal Pace,
Enfeebled, e're he reach'd the destin'd Place.

Her Brother she discern'd not, as afar 515
She saw him glitter in the Pomp of War,
But when she heard him insolently loud
Discharge his Darts, and thunder in the Crowd,
She Screams, and as about to quit the Walls,
On *Polynices* thus aloud she calls. 520

Awhile thy Arms, and horrid Crest resign,
And to yon Tow'r thy roving Eyes confine.

Know'st

Know'st thou thy Foes? and dost thou thus demand
 Our lawful Share of the supreme Command?
 Whate'er may be the Merits of the Cause, 525
 Such Conduct cannot meet with our Applause.
 By all the Gods of *Argos* (for our own
 Dishonour'd and of no Repute are grown)
 By thy fair Spouse, and all thy Soul holds dear,
 O calm thy Passion and a Sister hear. 530
 Of either Host behold a num'rous Train,
 Permit not these to sue, and sue in vain.
 This, only this I claim as the Reward
 Of my suspected Love, and firm Regard.
 Unbind the martial Terrors of thy Brow, 535
 Dismiss each Frown, and give me yet to know,
 That, what with honest Freedom I impart,
 Has wrought a just Impression on thy Heart.
 Fame says, thy Mother's suppliant Groans have won
Eteocles, her more obsequious Son 540
 But I return repuls'd, who Day and Night
 Have wept thy Exile, and bemoan'd thy Flight.
 By me thy haughty Father was appeas'd,
 E'en the stern *Oedipus*, so rarely pleas'd.
 Thy Brother stands acquitted of the Crime, 545
 What though he reign'd beyond th' allotted Time,
 And broke his Faith; yet he repents at last,
 And wisely shuns the Censure of the past.

v. 527. *For our own*] This is a very bitter Remonstrance of his Disregard to his native Town, by bringing a foreign Army to besiege it.

v. 534 *Of my suspected Love*] *Antigone* is reported to have confined her Affection to her younger Brother *Polynices*, and even to have admitted him to her Embraces. *Lactantius.*

Still'd

Still'd by these Words, his Rage began to cease,
 And his tumultuous Soul was hush'd to Peace : 550
 His Grasp relax'd, he gently turns the Reins,
 And sadly silent for a while remains.
 Thick-issuing Groans his blunted Anger show,
 And Tears, by Nature only taught to flow.
 But while he hesitates as in a Trance, 555
 Asham'd alike to linger or advance,
 The Gates broke down, his Mother thrust aside,
 Freed by the Fury, thus his Rival cried.
 Brother, at length I come, yet much repine,
 The Glory of the Challenge must be thine. 560
 Yet trust me, 'twas my Mother who delay'd
 The wish'd for Combate, and withheld my Blade.
 Soon shall this headless State, our native Land,
 Be subject to the Conqueror's Command.
 Nor was the Prince more mild in his Replies, 565
 Now, Tyrant, dost thou know thy Faith ? (he cries)
 Thou actest now at length a Brother's Part ;
 But come, and prove the Fury of my Dart.
 Such Covenants alone to choose remain,
 These are the Laws, that must secure our Reign. 570
 This Answer, stern to view, the Chief return'd ;
 For his proud Heart with secret Envy burn'd,
 As he descry'd his Brother's num'rous Train,
 That swarm'd around him, and half hid the Plain,
 The purple Trappings, that his Steed adorn, 575
 And studded Helm, by Monarchs only borne.
 Though he himself no common Armour bore,
 Nor on his Back a vulgar Tunic wore :
 Th' Embroidery his skilful Consort (taught
 Each Art that *Lydian* Damsels practise) wrought. 580

And now they sally to the dusty Plain,
 The Furies follow, mingling in the Train.
 Like trusty Squires, beside the Steeds they stand,
 Adjust their Trappings with officious Hand,
 And, while they seem attentive to the Reins, 585
 With intermingled Snakes augment their Manes,
 Two Brothers meet in Fight, alike in Face,
 Sprung from one Womb, tho' not from one Embrace.
 Now cease the Signals of the War around,
 Nor the hoarse Horns, nor shriller Trumpets sound 590
 When *Pluto* thunder'd from his gloomy Seat,
 The conscious Earth thrice shook beneath their Feet.
Mars lash'd his Steeds, and all the Pow'rs of War
 Retire from Scenes they cannot but abhor.
Bellona quench'd in Haste her flaming Brand, 595
 And laurell'd Valour quits the guilty Land.
 The Sister Furies blush at their own Deeds;
 While to the Walls the wretched Vulgar speeds,
 A just Aversion mixt with Pity show,
 And rain their Sorrows on the Crowd below. 600
 Here hoary Sires, a venerable Throng,
 Complain to Heav'n and cry, 'we've liv'd too long;'

v. 581. *And now they sally to the]* It is impossible but the whole Attention of the Reader must be awaken'd at this Crisis. Nothing could be better contriv'd to prepossess him with a just Detestation of this impious and unnatural Combate than the Fiction that pre-ludes it. The Images have something in them wonderfully grand and magnificent. We hear *Pluto* thundering, feel the Earth shaking under us, and see *Mars*, *Pallas* and the subaltern Deities of War retiring with the utmost Precipitation from so horrid a spectacle. Even the Furies themselves, who were accessory to the Duel, when it is upon the Point of being fought, are represented as shock'd, abash'd and astonish'd. The Circumstance of the Mothers driving away their Children has not more of Art than Nature in its Invention.

There

There sadder Matrons their bare Breasts display,
And kindly drive their eager Sons away.

Astonish'd at the Deed, infernal *Jove* 605
Opens each Passage to the Realms above.

The Phantoms, freed on ev'ry Mountain's Brow
Recline, Spectators of their Country's Woe ;
Around a Mist of *Stygian* Gloom they cast,
Glad, that their greatest Crimes are now surpast. 610

Soon as *Adraustus* was inform'd by Fame,
The wrathful Combatants, unaw'd by Shame,
Had issued forth to close the bloody Scene,
He urg'd his Steeds, and kindly rush'd between.

Much was he reverenc'd for Rank and Age, 615
But what cou'd these avail to calm their Rage ?

When Nature's Ties experienc'd no Regard,
Yet thus he strives their Conflict to retard.

Shall then the *Greek* and *Tyrian* Armies too
Your Crime, as yet unmatch'd, unacted, view ? 620
Can there be Pow'rs above, and Laws divine ?

But come, your Wrath at my Request resign.

I ask thee, Monarch ! tho' we act as Foes,
Yet know, our Strife from our Relation rose.

Of thee a Son's Obedience I demand ; 625
Yet if he thus desire supreme Command,
I lay aside the Garb of sov'reign Sway,
Argos and *Lerna* shall your Laws obey.

He spake : their stubborn Purpose they retain,
Nor his sage Counsels more their will restrain, 630
Than the Sea listens to the Sailor's Cry,
When the Surge bellows, and the Storm runs high.
When he perceiv'd his mild Intreaties vain,
And the two Knights encount'ring on the Plain,

While each, impatient, anxious first to wound, 635
 Inserts his Dart, and whirls the Sling around,
 He lash'd *Arion* (who, his Silence broke,
 The stern Decrees of Fate, portentous, spoke)
 Yields all the Reigns, and flying swift as Wind,
 His Camp, his Son, and Army leaves behind. 640
 Not paler look'd the Ruler of the Ghosts,
 When he compar'd his own *Tartarian Coasts*

v. 638. *The stern Decrees*] The Impropriety of this Fiction is not so flagrant as some may apprehend it, and our Author has the Sanction of Fable and History to justify his using it. *Livy* tells us of two Oxen, who forewarn'd the City of *Rome* in these Words, *Roma cave tibi*: and *Pliny* observes, that these Animals were remarkable for Vaticination. *Est frequens in prodigiis priscorum, bovem esse locutum.* *Homer* introduces the Horses of *Achilles* prophesying their Master's Death: and if he has done it without Censure from the Critics, why may not *Statius* be allowed the same Liberty after him?

v. 641. *Not paler look'd*] The following Verses of *Homer* with Mr. Pope's Note on them will clear up the Mystery of this Simile if there be any.

Τρεῖς γάρ τ' εἰν Κρόνον ἄμμεν ἀδελφοῖς, οὐ τέκε Ρέιν,
 Ζεὺς καὶ ἔγα, τείταλος δὲ Αἴδης σύνεοισιν ἀνάστων,
 Τευχίδι τὸν πάντα δέδασαν, ἔκαστος δὲ τεμνορε πτυῖς.
 "Ητοι ἔχων ἐλαχην πολινὸν ἀλλε ναύμεναισί^α
 Παλλομένιαν, Αἴδης δὲ ἐλαχην ζόφον ἀρρόνυτε.
 Ζεὺς δὲ τὸν ἐλαχην εύρην εἰν αἴθερι καὶ νεφέλησι.
 Γαῖα δὲ ἔτι ξανθὴ πάνταν καὶ μακρὸς οὐρυμπτώ.

Homer's Iliad. B. 15.

Some have thought the Platonic Philosophers drew from hence the Notion of their Triad (which the Christian Platonists since imagin'd to be an obscure Hint of the sacred Trinity.) The Trias of *Plato* is well known, τὸ αὐτὸν οὐ νῦν ὁ δημιουργός, οὐ τοις κοσμικοῖς ψυχηῖς. In his *Gorgias* he tells us, τὸν Ομηρον (autorem sc. fuisse) την τῶν δημιουργῶν Τριαδικῆς ὑποσύνοτος. See *Proclus in Plat. Theol. Lib. I. c. 5.* *Lucian, Philopat. Aristotle de cœlo, L. I. c. I.* speaking of the Ternarian Number from *Pythagoras*, has these Words, Τὰ τρία πάντα, καὶ τὸ τρία πάντα. καὶ πέρος ταῖς ἀριθμέταις τῶν θεῶν χρώμενα τῷ ἀριθμῷ τούτων. καθάπερ φασιν καὶ οἱ Πυθαγορεῖοι τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὰ πάντα τοῖς τρισὶν ἀριθμοῖς. Τελοῦται καὶ μίσον καὶ ἀρχὴ τὸν ἀριθμὸν ἔχει τὸ τοῦ πάντος

τῶν

With the more blissful Scenes of Heav'n above,
By fav'ring Lot assign'd to happier Jove.

Nor Fortune was indulgent to the Fray, 645

But by a blameless Error of the Way

She kept their rushing Coursers long apart,

And kindly turn'd aside each guiltless Dart.

At length the Chiefs, impatient for the Fight,

With Spurs and loosen'd Reins their Steeds excite, 651

While direful Omens from the Gods above

Both Armies to renew the Battle move.

Through either Camp a busy Murmur rolls,

And glorious Discord fires their inmost Souls.

Oft Passion urges them to rush between, 655

And intercept with Arms the bloody Scene,

But Piety, who view'd with equal Scorn

The Gods, and those of mortal Mothers born,

Sate in a distant Part of Heav'n, alone,

Nor habited, as she was whilom known. 660

A gloomy discontented Look she wore,

The Snow-white Fillet from her Tresses tore,

And like a Mother or a Sister shew'd

Her tender Heart in Tears, that freely flow'd.

The guilty Fates and Saturn's Son she blam'd, 665

And with a Voice that pierc'd the Skies, exclaim'd,

τρῶτε δὲ τὸν τῆς τριάδος. From which Passage *Trapezuntius* endeavour'd very seriously to prove that *Aristotle* had a perfect Knowledge of the Trinity. *Duport* (who furnish'd me with this Note, and who seems to be sensible of the Folly of *Trapezuntius*) nevertheless in his *Gnomologia Homerica* has placed opposite to this Verse that of St. *John*: There are three, who give Testimony in Heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I think this the strongest Instance I ever met with of the Manner of thinking of such Men, whose too much Learning has made them mad.

550 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book XI.

She soon wou'd quit the starry Realms of *Jove*
And seek a Mansion in the *Stygian Grove*.

Why was I form'd, O Author of my Birth,
To sway the Sons of Heav'n, and Sons of Earth? 570
Suspended are my Honours, lost my Fame,
And Piety is nothing but a Name.

O Madness, fatal Madness of Mankind,
And Arts, by rash *Prometheus* ill design'd.
Far better had the World continu'd void, 675
And the whole Species been at once destroy'd.

Try we howe'er their Fury to restrain,
Some Praise is due, shou'd we but try in vain.
She spoke, and watching for a fav'ring Time,
With swift Descent forsook th'aërial Clime. 680
Sad as she seem'd, a snowy Trail of Light
Pursu'd her Steps, and mark'd her rapid Flight.
Scarce had she landed, when, their Wrath supprest,
The Love of Peace prevails in ev'ry Breast.

Adown their Cheeks the Tears in silence steal 685
And the two Foes a transient Horror feel.
Fictitious Arms, and Male-Attire she wears,
And thus aloud her high Behests declares.
Hither, whoe'er fraternal Friendship knows,
If yet we may restrain these Brother Foes. 690

Then (for I ween Heav'n pitied) from each Hand
The Weapons fell, and fixt the Coursers stand.
E'en Fortune seem'd to spin a short Delay,
And rush between to close the dreadful Fray;
But stern *Erinnys* pierc'd the thin Disguise, 695
And swift as Lightning to the Goddess flies.

What urg'd thee, who to Peace art more inclin'd,
To mingle in the Wars of Human-kind?

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Retire, advis'd, and give the Vengeance Way;
 Our's is the Field, and Fortune of the Day. 700
 Why was thou wanting, when a just Pretence
 Was offer'd thee to war in their Defence?
 When *Bacchus* bath'd his Arms in kindred Blood,
 And *Mars*'s Serpent drank the guilty Flood;
 When the *Sphinx* fell, and *Cadmus* sow'd the Plain; 705
 When *Laius* by his Son was rashly slain,
 Or, guided by our Torch, *Jocasta* press'd
 The Bed of Incest. — Thus the Fiend addrest
 The bashful Pow'r, pursu'd her as she fled
 With Snakes, and wav'd her Torch around her Head.
 The Goddess draws the Veil before her Eyes, 711
 And for Redress to *Jove* all-potent flies.
 Soon as she left the Heroes, by Degrees
 Their Ire returns, and nought but Arms can please.
 The perjur'd Monarch first his Javelin flings; 715
 Full on the middle Orb the Weapon rings,
 Nor pierc'd the Gold, but bounding from the Shield
 Exhausts its blunted Fury on the Field.
 The Prince advances next, in Act to throw,
 But first bespeaks the Pow'rs that rule below 720
 Ye Gods, of whom with more than hop'd Success
 The Son of *Laius* whilom ask'd Redress,

v. 721. *And for Redress*] *Barthius* with more than usual Propriety observes, that our Author like the great *Homer* has nodded over this Passage. How (says he) is it probable, that Piety should have recourse to *Jupiter* for Redress, on whom with all the other Deities she had thrown out the most bitter Invectives, and threatened, as he informs us,

She soon would quit the starry Realms of *Jove*,
 And seek a Mansion in the *Stygian* Grove.

To

552 STATIUS's THEBAID. Book XI.

To this less impious Pray'r your Ears incline,
And realize the Mischief I design.

Nor think, my Rival slain, I wish to live,
This guilty Spear shall Absolution give.

Give me but Breath to tell him that I reign,
And by surviving, double all his Pain.

The rapid Spear, with forceful Vigour cast,
Between the Rider's Thigh and Courser past.

A double Death the vengeful Marksman meant,
But the wise Chief his Knee alertly bent;
Nor, innocent of Blood, the Lance descends,
But the short Ribs with glancing Fury rends.

The Steed wheels round, impatient of the Reins,
And draws a bloody Circle on the Plains.

The Prince, presuming it his Rival's Wound,
(He too believes it) with a furious Bound
Springs forward, and advancing o'er the Mead,
Pours all his Fury on the wounded Steed.

Reins mix'd with Reins, and Hand inlock'd in Hand,
At once the falling Coursers press the Strand.
As Ships, entangled by the Wind, contend,
Their Oars exchange, their mingled Rudders rend,

v. 729. *Give me but Breath*] I am inclined to believe this was one of those Passages, that induced Mr. Pope to remark on our Author's Heroes, that an Air of Impetuosity runs through them all? the same horrid and savage Courage appears in *Capaneus*, *Tydeus*, *Hippomedon*, &c. They have a Parity of Character which makes them seem Brothers of one Family — *Lucan* puts a Wish in *Cæsar's* Mouth, which is not very dissimilar.

Mihi funere nullo
Est opus, O Superis lacerum retinete cadaver
Fluctibus in mediis; desint mihi busta, Rogusque
Dum metuar semper, terraque expester ab omni. Ph. L. 5.

And

And, while they struggle in the gloomy Storm 745

To break the Knot, a stricter Union form;

Then, all the Pilot's Art in vain applied,

Together in a Depth of Sea subside.

Such was the Scene of Conflict. Art they scorn,

By mutual Anger on each other borne. 750

The Sparks, that issue from each other's

Kindle their Ire, and bid their Fury rise:

Entwin'd in one their Hands and Swords were seen,

So close, no Interval was left between,

But mutual Murmurs, as in stern Embrace 755

They mix, supply the Horn, and Trumpet's Place.

As when, with Anger stung and jealous Rage,

Two Boars, the Terror of the Wood, engage,

They gnash their Iv'ry Tusks, their Bristles rise,

And Light'ning flashes from their glaring Eyes : 760

While the pale Hunter from some Mountain's Height

Stills the shrill-baying Hounds and views the Fig

Thus fought the Chiefs; nor tho' they yet had f

Their Strength exhausted by a mortal Wound,

Yet flow'd the Blood,* the Mischief was begun, 765

Nor ought, the Fiends could wish, remain'd, undone.

They grieve, the Wrath of Man can yet do more,

And praise the strict Observance of their Lore

v. 759. *As when*] The Poet has here given us an Image of the two Combatants with great Precision and Exactness. If he had compared them to a Boar and a Lion fighting, he had not taken in the Circumstance of Relation between the two Heroes, which constitutes the Essence of the Comparison. The Hunter and his Dogs very properly correspond with the Soldiery, who were Spectators of the Duel. In short (as Mr. Pope observes of a Simile in *Homer*) there is no Circumstance of their present Condition that is not to be found in the Comparison, and no particular in the Comparison that does not resemble the Action of the Heroes.

Each

Each aims a deadly Blow, and thirsts for Blood,
 Nor sees his own, that forms a purple Flood, 770
 Full on his Foe th' impetuous Exile flies,
 Exhorts his Hand, and ev'ry Nerve applies :
 Much he presumes upon his righteous Cause,
 And juster Anger, then his Falchion draws,
 And in his Brother's Groin the Steel inserts, 775
 Where his ill-guarding Mail the Cincture girts.
 The King, alarm'd as he began to feel
 The cold Invasion of the griding Steel,
 Retires beneath his Target. He pursues,
 As the wide Wound, and issuing Gore he views, 780
 And with a Voice that shook the Fields around,
 Insults him thus, as still he quits his Ground.
 Brother, why this Retreat ? — O transient Sleep
 And Vigils, which th' ambitious ever keep !
 Behold these Limbs, by Want and Exile steel'd ; 785
 And learn to bear the Hardships of the Field :
 Nor trust the Fortune, that bestows a Throne,
 And rashly call, what she but lends, thy own.
 The King as yet his vital Breath retain'd,
 And ebbing still the Stream of Life remain'd. 790
 Spontaneously supine he press'd the Ground,
 And meditates in Death a fraudulent Wound.
 His Brother, hoping now the Day his own,
 Extends his Hands to Heav'n, and in a Tone
 That shook *Citbæron*, echoing thro' the Skies, 795
 Thus o'er his prostrate Foe, insulting, cries,
 'Tis well. -- The Gods have heard. -- He pants for Breath,
 And his Eyes darken with the Shades of Death.
 Let some one bring the Crown, and Robe of State.
 While yet he sees, and struggles with his Fate 800

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He paus'd, inspir'd by some unfriendly Pow'r,
To strip his Rival in his dying Hour,
As if his ill-earn'd Spoils, in Triumph borne,
Would raise his Glory, and the Fanes adorn.

The Monarch, who, tho' feigning to expire 805

Surviv'd to execute his vengeful Ire,

When he perceiv'd the Posture of his Foe
(His Bosom obvious to a mortal Blow)

Unseen his Falchion raises, and supplies

With Rage the Strength, that ebbing Life denies, 810

Then in his unsuspecting Brother's Heart

With joyful Anger sheaths the steely Part.

The Prince rejoins. —— Then art thou yet alive,

And does thy Thirst of Vengeance still survive?

Base Wretch! thy Perfidy can never gain 815

A blissful Mansion in th' *Elysian* Plain.

Hence to the Shades, there I'll renew my Claim

Before the *Cretan*, who is said by Fame

To shake the *Gnossian* Urn, and Woes prepare

For perjur'd Kings, and all who falsely swear. 820

This said, he sunk beneath the deathful Blow,

And with the Weight of Arms o'erwhelm'd his Foe.

Go, cruel Shades, the Pains of Hell exhaust,

Mourn, all ye Fiends, the Palm of Guilt is lost.

Henceforward learn the Sons of Earth to spare, 825

Nor punish Deeds, which ill with these compare.

Deeds, that are yet unmatch'd in any Clime,

Nor known in all the spacious Walks of Time.

Let dark Oblivion veil the guilty Fight,

And Kings alone th' enormous Crime recite. 830

When

sdT

When *Oedipus* had heard, the Brothers fell
 By mutual Wounds, his subterraneous Cell
 He quits in Haste, and drags to Scenes of Strife
 His wretched Load of unillumin'd Life.
 Invet'rate Filth and clotted Gore disspread, 835
 The silver Honors of his aged Head.
 Dire to the View his hollow Cheeks arise,
 And frightful yawn the Ruins of his Eyes.
 His Right-Hand on the Staff was seen to rest.
 His left the Shoulder of his Daughter prest. 540
 Such here on Earth would hoary Charon seem,
 Should he forsake awhile the *Stygian* Stream;
 The Stars wou'd blush to view his hideous Mein,
 And *Phæbus* ficken at his Form obscene.
 Nor he himself would long avail to bear 845
 The Change of Climate, and a foreign Air,
 While in his Absence swells the living Freight,
 And Ages on the Banks his Coming wait,
 Soon as they reach'd the Field, aloud he cries,
 O thou, on whom alone my Age relies, 850
 Direct me to my Sons, and let me share
 The fun'ral Honours, which their Friends prepare.

v. 831. *When Oedipus*] Of all the Pictures, which the Pencil of Poetry ever presented to the Eye of the Mind, none abounds in more masterly Strokes and Touches than this before us. *Oedipus* appears here in all the Pomp of Wretchedness (if, I may use that Expression) and can only be equalled by *Shakespear's King Lear*.

v. 845. *Nor be*] Our Author has taken the Hint of this Hypothesis from *Ovid's Metamorphosis*.

Est via declivis, per quam Tyrinthius Heros
 Restantem, contraque diem, radiosque micantes
 Obliquantem oculos, nexit adamante catenis
 Cerberon attraxit. ————— Lib. 8th.

The

The Virgin, ignorant of his Command,
Replies in Groans, and lingers on the Strand ;
While Chariots, Arms, and Warriors heap the Way,
Their Feet entangle, and their Progress stay. 856
Scarce can his aged Legs the Sire sustain,
And his Conductress labours oft in vain.
Soon as her Shrieks proclaim'd the fatal Place,
He mix'd his Limbs with theirs in cold Embrace. 860
Speechless he lies, and murmurs o'er each Wound,
Nor for a while his Words a Passage found.
But while their Mouths beneath their Helms he seeks,
His Sighs give Way, and all the Father speaks.
Does then Affection bear again its Part. 865
In decent Grief, and can this stubborn Heart,
By Wrongs inur'd, and by Distresses steel'd,
To conq'ring Nature's late Impressions yield.
Else why these Tears, that long had ceas'd to flow,
And Groans, that more than vulgar Sorrow show ? 870
Accept then, what, as Sons, you rightly claim,
(For well your Actions justify the Name)
Fain would I speak, but know not which demands
The Preference by Birth : — then say whose Hands
I grasp. — How shall I give your Shades their Due, 875
And with what Pomp your Obsequies pursue ?
O that my Eyes could be restor'd again,
And the lost Power of renewing Pain !
To Heav'n alas ! too just my Cause appear'd,
And too successfully my Pray'rs were heard 880
What God was near me (when by Passion sway'd,
My Vows to *Pluto*, and the Fiends I paid)
And faithfully convey'd the Curse to Fate ?
Charge not on me, my Sons, the dire Debate,

But

558 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book XI.

But on my Parents, Throne, infernal Foes, 885
 And injur'd Eyes, sole Authors of your Woes.
 My guiltless Guide, and *Pluto* loth to spare,
 I call to vouch the sacred Truth I swear.
 Thus worthily may I resign my Breath, 890
 Nor *Laius* shun me in the Realms of Death.
 Alas ! what Bonds, what Wounds are these I feel !
 O loose your Hands, nor longer grasp the Steel.
 No longer let these hostile Folds be seen ;
 And now at least admit your Sire between.
 Thus wail'd the wretched King, and sick of Life 895
 In secret sought the Instrument of Strife :
 But she, suspicious of his rash Designs,
 Conceal'd it, whilst in Rage he thus rejoins.
 Ye vengeful Furies ! can no Swords be found ?
 Was all the Weapon buried in the Wound ? 900
 His Comrade, raising him, her Grief supprest,
 And much rejoic'd, that Pity touch'd his Breast.
 Meanwhile, impatient of the vital Light,
 And, dreading to survive the threaten'd Fight,
 The Queen the Sword of hapless *Laius* sought, 905
 (A fatal Spoil, with future Mischiefs fraught.)
 And, much complaining of the Pow'rs above,
 Her furious Son, and her incestuous Love,
 Attempts to pierce her Breast. Her fault'ring Hand
 Long struggled to infix the weighty Brand, 910
 At length with Toil her aged Veins she tore,
 And purg'd the Bed of Guilt with issuing Gore.
 The fair *Ismene* to her Rescue flew,
 Her snowy Arms around her Mother threw,
 To dry the Wound her ev'ry Care applied, 915
 And rent her Tresses, sorrowing at her Side.

Such

Such erst in *Marathon's* impervious Wood
Erigone beside her Father stood,
When, hast'ning to discharge her pious Vows,
She loos'd the Knot, and cull'd the strongest Boughs
But Fortune, who with Joy malign survey'd 921
The Hopes of either Rival frustrate made,
Transfers the Sceptre thence with envicus Hand,
And gives to *Creon* the supreme Command.
Alas! how wretched was the Term of Fight! 925
Another rules, while they dispute their Right.
Him all invite with one approving Voice,
And slain *Menœceus* justifies their Choice.
At length he mounts the long-contested Throne
Of *Thebes*, to Kings of late so fatal grown. 930
O flatt'ring Empire, and deluding Love
Of Pow'r! shall such Examples fruitless prove?
See, how he frowns upon his menial Train,
And waves the bloody Ensign of his Reign!
What more? should Fortune all her Store exhaust:
Behold the Father in the Monarch lost! 936
He whilom mourn'd his Son's untimely Death;
Now glories, that he thus resign'd his Breath.
Scarce had he reign'd, the Tyrant of a Day,
When, as a Sample of his future Sway, 940

v. 917. Such *erst* in *Marathon's*] *Erigone* was the Daughter of *Icarus*; and being directed by her Dog to the Place, where her Father was slain, through Excess of Grief hung herself upon a neighbouring Tree: but the Branch breaking down with her Weight, she was said to seek stronger Boughs. At length she accomplished her Purpose, and for her Piety was translated into Heaven, and became the Constellation, we call *Virgo*.

v. 939. Scarce bad he reign'd] *Seneca* in his *Thyestes*, says: *Ut nemo doceat fraudis, scelerumque viam, Regnum docebit.* A Truth which the History of every Age and Country will evince to us.

M^{rs} Jay

The last funereal Honours he denies
 To the slain Greeks, expos'd to foreign Skies ;
 And, ever mindful of an Insult past,
 Forbids their wand'ring Shades to rest at last.
 Then meeting, as he pass'd th' Ogygian Gate, 945
 The Son of *Laius*, Object of his Hate,
 At first his Age and Title he rever'd,
 And for awhile his eyeless Rival fear'd :
 But soon the King returns : and inly stung,
 He cries with all the Virulence of Tongue. 950
 Avaunt, fell Omen to the Victors, hence,
 Nor longer by Delays my Wrath incense ;
 Hence with thy Furies, while thy Safety calls ;
 And let thy Absence purify our Walls.
 Thy Wishes granted, and thy Children slain, 955
 What Hopes, or impious Vows can now remain ?
 At this Reproach, as some terrific Sight,
 His meager Cheeks stood trembling with Affright.
 Old Age awhile recedes ; his Hand resigns
 The Staff, nor on his Guide he now reclines : 960
 But, trusting to his Rage, with equal Pride,
 And Bitterness of Words he thus replied.
 What tho' the Slain no more thy Thoughts engage,
 And thou hast Leisure here to vent thy Rage,

Μέγας ὁλος νοσεψεις δυναται (says Pindar) or in other Words. Good Fortune is less tolerable than bad. That we are the more liable to fall into Vices, when we have the Means of gratifying them, is indisputably true : how little then ought those to repine, whom Providence has placed in a lowly Situation of Life secure from many Temptations, to which the great and the rich are exposed : or ought we not rather to look upon it as the most distinguishing Mark of Favour, which could possibly be conferred upon us.

Yet

Yet know, the Crown, which late adorn'd my Head,
Affords thee no Pretence to wrong the dead, 966

And trample on the Ruins of those Kings,

From whose Misfortunes thy short Glory springs.

Go on, and merit thus the regal Sway.

But why this Caution, and this long Delay? 970

Give Tyranny at once the Length of Reins,
And boldly act, whate'er thy Will ordains.

Would'st thou with Exile punish an Offence,

Know, Exile argues too much Diffidence

Of thy own Pow'r, then check thy Rage no more, 975

But auspicate thy Reign with human Gore.

Expect not, I shall deprecate the Stroke,

And on my Knees thy Clemency invoke.

Long since in me the Source of Fear is dry;

And Death with all its Horrors I defy. 980

Is Banishment decreed? —— the World I left,

Of all its Joys spontaneously bereft;

And, long impatient of the Scenes of Light,

Forc'd from their Orbs the bleeding Balls of Sight.

What equal Punishment canst thou prepare? 985

I fly my Country, and its tainted Air.

It moves me not, in what so distant Clime

I pass the wretched Remnant of my Time.

No Land, I ween, will to my Pray'r's deny

The little Spot, that I shall occupy. 990

Yet *Thebes* most pleases, as it gave me Birth,

And lodges all my Soul holds dear on Earth.

Th' *Aonian* Sceptre long may'st thou possess,

And rule the *Thebans* with the same Success,

As *Cadmus*, *I*, and *Laius* rul'd before: 995

Nor Fortune's Sunshine beam upon thee more.

May Sons and Loves like mine thy Woes enhance,
Nor Virtue guard thee from the Strokes of Chance.
Much may'st thou love the Life, thou'rt doom'd to
loose,
And sue for Pardon, which thy Foes refuse. 1000
Suffice these Curses to deform thy Reign. ——
Then lead me, Daughter, from his curst Domain:
But why should'st thou partake paternal Woe?
Our potent Monarch will a Guide bestow.
The Princess, fearing to be left behind, 1005
Revers'd his Pray'rs, and cries, on Earth reclin'd.
By this thy Kingdom, and the sacred Ghost
Of brave *Menæceus*, our Support and Boast,

v. 997. *May Sons*] Perverse Children are not reckoned the greatest Evil of Life by our Poet only: King *Lear*, inflaming Nature against his Daughter *Gonerill*, says.

If she must teem,
Create her Child of Spleen, that it may live,
And be a thwart, disnatur'd Torment to her;
Let it stamp Wrinkles on her Brow of Youth,
With cadent Tears fret Channels in her Cheeks,
Turn all her Mother's Pains and Benefits
To Laughter and Contempt; that she may feel,
How sharper than a Serpent's Tooth it is,
To have a thankless Child. A&t 1. Scene 15.

v. 1007. *By this Kingdom*] *Oedipus* having exasperated *Creon* by his spirited, though insolent Reply, the Prince's *Antigone* takes upon her to calm his Anger: her Oration is therefore framed with an opposite Air to all which has been hitherto said, sedate and inoffensive. She begins with an Apology for her Father's Disrespect, tells him, that the greatest Favour he could confer, would be to sentence him to Death, sets her good Wishes in Opposition to his Imprecations, reminds him of his Enemy's former Rank and Dignity, but present Inability to injure him, and concludes with evincing the ill Policy of banishing him. In short this Specimen suffices to shew *Antigone*'s good Sense, and the Power of female Oratory in mollifying the almost Implacable Hatred of *Creon* to her Father.

Forgive,

Forgive, if, heated in his own Defence,
His Answers sounds like Pride and Insolence. 1010
From long Complaints arose this haughty Stile ;
Nor thee alone he glories to revile :
But e'en the Gods, and I, who ne'er offend,
Oft prove the Rancour, which he cannot mend.
To quit this hated Life is all his Aim, 1015
And fatal Liberty his only Claim :
For this he spends in Obloquies his Breath,
And hopes by Scandal to procure his Death.
But may the Pow'rs of Heav'n direct thy Sway,
And with fresh Gifts distinguish ev'ry Day. 1020
Such Impotence resent not, but despise ;
And keep my Father's Fate before thine Eyes.
In Gold and regal Purple once he shone,
And, girt with Arms, sublimely fill'd the Throne,
From whence he gave to all impartial Laws, 1025
With Patience heard, with Justice clos'd the Cause.
Alas ! of all his once-unnumber'd Trains
A single Guide, and Comrade now remains.
Can he thy Weal oppose ? and wilt thou rage
Against an Enemy, disarm'd by Age ; 1030
Must he retire, because he loudly groans,
And grates thy Ears with inauspicious Moans ?

v. 1023. *In Gold &c.*] *Barthius* observes, that this Passage is a Contradiction of what the Poet says in the first Book, Verse 191.

Yet then no Gates of Iv'ry did unfold
The Palace, &c.

Notwithstanding this, I could have defended this Oversight with some seemingly ingenious Conjectures, after the Example of those Commentators, who never fail their Author at a Pinch ; but as I have no Intention of introducing the Thebaid upon the Public, as a perfect Poem, I shall most willingly subscribe to *Barthius* his Opinion, that the Passage before us is highly exceptionable.

Resign thy Fears : at Distance from the Court
 Hence shall he mourn, nor interrupt thy Sport.
 I'll break his Spirit, urge him to retreat 1035
 And close confine him to his gloomy Seat.
 But should he wander, exil'd and distrest,
 What City would admit him as a Guest ?
 Woud'st thou, to polish'd *Argos* he should go,
 Crawl to *Mycenæ* in the Garb of Woe, 1040
 And, crouching at their vanquish'd Monarch's Gate,
 The Rout and Slaughter of our Host relate ?
 Why should he thus expose the Nation's Crimes,
 And open all the Sorrows of the Times ?
 Conceal, whate'er we suffer : at thy Hand 1045
 No mighty Favours, *Creon*, we demand.
 Pity his Sorrows, and revere his Age,
 Nor wrong the Dead in Fullness of thy Rage :
 The slaughter'd *Thebans* may enjoy at least
 Funereal Rites. — The prostrate Princess ceas'd : 1050
 Her Sire withdraws her, and with Threats disdains
 The Grant of Life, which scarcely she obtains.
 The Lion thus, who green in Years, had sway'd
 The Forests round, by ev'ry Beast obey'd,
 Beneath some arching Rock in Peace extends 1055
 His listless Bulk ; and tho' no Strength defends
 His Age from Insults, yet secure he lies ;
 His venerable Form Access denies :

v. 1053. *The Lion thus*] This Comparison is as just as Language can make it. I cannot find, that *Statius* is indebted for it to any of his poetical Predecessors. The *Non adeunda Senectus* is a Beauty of Diction I could not preserve in my Translation, nor indeed will the *English* Idiom admit of it.

But

BOOK XI. STADIUS's THEBAID. 565

But if a kindred Voice pervade his Ears,
Reflecting on himself, his Limbs he rears, 1060
And wishing much his Youth restor'd again,
With Envy hears the Monarchs of the Plain.
At length Compassion touch'd the Tyrant's Breast;
Yet he but grants a Part of her Request,
And cries. — Not distant from his native Coasts, 1065
Of whose Delights so much he vainly boasts,
Shall he be banish'd, so he cease to roam,
And leave inviolate each holy Dome.
Let him possess his own *Cithæron*'s Brow,
The Wood contiguous, and the Fields below, 1070
O'er which the Shades of Heroes, slain in Fight,
Are seen to flit, and shun the loathsome Light,
This said, his Course th' Usurper homeward bent,
Nor durst the Croud withhold their feign'd Assent.
Meanwhile the routed *Greeks* by Stealth retire, 1075
And leave their Camp expos'd to hostile Fire.
To none their Ensigns, and their Chiefs remain;
But silent, and dispers'd they quit the Plain:
And to a glorious Death, and martial Fame
Prefer a safe Return, and living Shame. 1080
Night favours their Design, Assistance yields,
And in a Cloud the flying Warriors shields.

THE

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE TWELFTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Thebans, after some Doubts concerning the Reality of the Enemy's Flight, repair to the Field of Battle, and bury their Dead. Creon discharges his Son's Obsequies with great Solemnity, and laments over him in a very pathetic Manner: he then forbids his Subjects to burn the Greeks. In the mean time the Wives of the six Captains slain in the Siege march in Procession to Theseus, King of Athens to sollicit his Assistance in procuring the dead Bodies. Argia leaves them, goes to Thebes, accompanied only by Menætes, and burns the Body of Polynices on Eteocles's Pile. She there meets with Antigone, who assists her. They are taken, and brought before Creon, who sentences them both to Death. By the Interposition of Pallas the Argive Ladies meet with a favourable Reception from Theseus, who sends a Herald to Creon, and orders him to procure funeral Rites for the Greeks, or declare War against him. Upon the Tyrant's obstinate Refusal the Athenians march to Thebes, which upon the Death of Creon surrenders to Theseus, and entertains him in a hospitable Manner. The Princesses, having obtain'd the Bodies, discharge their funeral Rites in a very sumptuous Manner, a particular Description of which the Poet waves, and concludes the work with an Address to his Poem.

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THE
THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE TWELFTH.

”**T**WAS now the Time, that on the Vault serene
Of Heav’n a smaller Groupe of Stars was seen,
And *Phœbe* glimmer’d with diminish’d Horn;
When fair *Aurora*, Harbinger of Morn,
Dispels afar the trembling Shades of Night, 5
And resalutes the World with orient Light.
Now thro’ the desart Town the *Thebans* stray,
And mourn the tardy progress of the Day,
Tho’, since the Conflict with their *Argive* Foes,
Now first they taste the Sweets of soft Repose: 10

The Propriety of adding this last Book depends entirely on the Kind of Poem, which the Critics determine this to be. If they settle it to be an Heroic or Historical Poem only, they grant of Consequence the Necessity of adding it in order to render the Poem compleat: but if it is an Epic Poem, it should have ended at the Death of the two Brothers, according to the *Aristotelian* and *Boffuvian* System. But after all I cannot see any great Impropriety in superadding to the grand Catastrophe, if the Excrecence grows naturally out of the Subject, and is equally well executed with the former, as I think no one will deny of this before us. I shall conclude this Note with observing, that *Virgil* is the only Writer, who has strictly adher’d to this Form.

Nor,

570 STATIUS's THE BAID. Book XII.

Nor yet the fears of hostile Vengeance cease :
 Sleep hovers round the Bed of sickly Peace ;
 Nor rests. — They scarcely dare to quit the Gate,
 And pass the Trench : the Mem'ry of their Fate,
 And Horrors of the late-embattel'd Plain 15
 Deep in their timid Breasts infix'd remain.
 As Mariners long absent, when they land
 Perceive a seeming Motion in the Strand ;
 Thus at each Noise, the Troops, recoiling, halt,
 And listen, fearful of a new Assault. 20
 As, when the Serpent scales some Tow'r, possest
 By Doves *Idalian* ; as their fears suggest,
 The white-plum'd Parents drive their Offspring home ;
 Then with their Claws defend th' aerial Dome,
 And call their little Rage forth to the Fray. 25
 Strait tho' the scaly monster hies away :
 The Danger past, they dread to leave their Brood,
 And sally forth in quest of wonted Food ;
 At length with cautious Fear they wing their flight,
 And oft look back from Heav'n's impervious Height.
 They seek their slaughter'd Comrades on the Coast,
 (The bloodless Relics of the mangled Host)
 And wander o'r the blood-impurpled Mead,
 Where Grief and Sorrow (Guides unpleasing) lead. 30
 Some but the Bodies of their Friends descry,
 While near another's Limbs and Visage lie ;
 Others bemoan the Chariots or accost
 (All that remains) the Steeds whose Lords are lost,

v. 22. By Doves *Idalian*] The Expression in the Original is *Idalicae Volucres* ; which, as *Idalus* was a Mount consecrated to *Venus*, and the Dove was the Favourite of that Goddess, cannot be supposed to mean any other Species of Birds, but it is very extraordinary, *Statius* should represent them so very bold.

Part

Part kiss the gaping Wounds of Heroes slain,
 And of their too great Fortitude complain, 40
 Digested now the Scene of Slaughter lies :
 Part bear huge Spears erected in their Eyes ;
 Here sever'd from their Arms are Hands display'd,
 Tenacious still of the discolour'd Blade :
 In some no Traces of their Death appear, 45
 Their Comrades rush, and shed the ready Tear.
 Around the shapeless Trunks Debates arise,
 The Question, who should solve their Obsequies.
 Oft (Fortune sporting with their Woe) they pour
 O'er hostile Chiefs a tributary Show'r ; 50
 Nor can the Friend his slaughter'd Friend implore,
 Or know the *Theban* from the *Grecian* Gore.
 But those, whose Family entire remains, I
 From Sorrow free, expatiate o'er the Plains,
 Inspect the Tents once fill'd with *Argive* Bands, 55
 And fire them in Revenge with flaming Brands :
 While others seek the Place, where *Tydeus* lies
 And the fam'd Seer was ravish'd from their Eyes :
 Or search, if still on *Jove's* blaspheming Foe
 Th' etherial Lightnings unextinguish'd glow. 60
 Now *Phæbus* set on their unfinish'd Grief,
 And Vesper rose : yet heedless of Relief,

v. 53. *But those*] We find the *Trojans* diverting themselves in a similar Manner after the suppos'd Retreat of the *Grecian* Army.

Ergo omnis longo solvit se Teucria luctu :
 Panduntur Portæ. juvat ire, et Dorica castra,
 Desertosque videre Locos, Littusque relictum.
 Hic Dolopum manus, hic sævus tendebat Achilles :
 Classibus hic Locus ; hic acies certare solebant

Virg. Æn. L. 2.

The

The lengthen'd Strain, unwearied, they pursue,
And feasting on the Scene, their Fears renew :
There, disregarding the departed Light, 65
In Couds they lie, and sorrowing out the Night,
Alternate groan : (while far away retire
The Savage-Monsters, scar'd with Noise and Fire.)
Nor did their Eyes with constant Weeping close,
The Stars in vain persuading to repose. 70
Now *Phosphor* thrice an orient Lustre shed
O'er Heav'n, and gleam'd on the pale-visag'd Dead.
When the thin'd Groves, and widow'd Mountains
mourn

Their leafy Pride on rolling Waggons borne.
Cithaeron, wont to grace funereal Piles, 75
And fair *Theumesus* yield their verdant Spoils :
Prostrate on Earth the Forest's Glory lies,
While thick around the flaming Pyres arise.
The *Theban* Shades with joyful Eyes survey'd
This last kind Office to their Relief paid : 80
But the sad *Argives*, hov'ring round, bemoan
The hostile Fires, and Honours not their own.
No regal Exequies, and Pomp adorn
The Tyrant-King, neglected and forlorn ;
Nor his fierce Brother for a *Grecian* held, 85
And from his Country exil'd and expell'd ;
But *Thebes* and *Creon* for his Son prepare
More than *Plebeian* Rites, their common Care.

v. 70. *The Stars*] The Original is, nec dulcibus astris victa,
coierunt Lumina, which I have translated thus from the Authority
of *Virgil*.

— *Suadentque cadentia Sidera somnos.*

A costly

A costly Pile of choicest Wood they raise,
 High as his Worth, and spreading as his Praise: 90
 On this they heap the trophied Spoils of *Mars*,
 Arms, batter'd Bucklers, and unwieldy Cars.
 The Chief, as Conqueror, on these is laid,
 With Fillets grac'd, and Wreaths that never fade.

Alcides thus Mount *Oeta* press'd of yore, 95
 By Heav'n forbad on Earth to linger more.
 To crown the whole, the captive *Greeks* were slain,
 And hurried in their Youth to *Pluto's* Reign.

v. 95. *Alcides thus*] As this Funeral is very elegantly describ'd by *Seneca*, I shall make no Apology for transcribing it here.

Ut omnis Oeten moesta corripuit manus,
 Hinc fagus umbras perdit, & toto jacet
 Succisa trunco; flexit hinc pinum ferox
 Abris minantem, et nube de media vocat;
 Ruitura cautes movit, et Sylvam trahit
 Secum minorem. Chaonis quondum loquax
 Stat vasta late quercus, et Phœbum vetat,
 Ultraque totos porrigit ramos nemus.
 Gemit illa multo vulnere impresso minax,
 Frangitque cuneos. resilit excussus Chalybs,
 Vulnusque ferrum patitur, et truncum fugit.
 Commota tantum est; tunc cadens lenta morâ
 Duxit ruinam. protinus radius locus
 Admisit omnes
 Aggeritur omnis sylva, et alternæ trabes
 In astra tollunt Herculi angustum rogum,
 Ut pressit Oeten, ac suis oculis rogum.
 Lustravit, omnes fregit impositus trabes,
 Arcumque poscit: _____
 Tum rigida secum spolia Nemeæi mali
 Arsura poscit. latuit in spolia rogus.

Herc. Oet. Act. 5. Scen. I.

v. 97. *The captive Greeks*] Shocking as this Act of Cruelty may appear to some Christian Readers, it was authoriz'd by the military Customs, and religious Laws of those Times, as may be seen from *Homer* and *Virgil*, who have both made their Heroes guilty of it in discharging the Burial-Rites of *Patroclus* and *Pallas*.

Then well-rein'd Steeds, the Strength of War, are
thrown

Beside their Lord: The Sire heaves many a Groan, 100
When *Vulcan* on the high-heap'd Victims preys;
Then thus he cries, deep musing on the Blaze.

O thou design'd to share with me the Throne,
And after me to govern *Thebes* alone,
Hadst thou not, prodigal of vital Breath, 105
To save the Realm, preferr'd a glorious Death:
The Sweets of Empire, and imperial State
Are all embitter'd by thy early Fate.

What tho' thy Presence grace the Courts of Jove,
And mortal Virtue shine in Heav'n above: 110
To thee, my Deity, shall Vows be paid,
And Tears a constant Tribute to thy Shade.

Let *Thebes* high Temples raise, and Altars heap:
Give me alone the Privilege to weep.

And now alass! what Rites shall I decree, 115
What Honours worthy of myself and thee?
O that the Gods, to deck thy sculptur'd Bust,
Would lay the Pride of *Argos* in the Dust!
I'd crown the Pile, and yield my forfeit Breath
With all the Honours, gain'd me by thy Death. 120

πιούρας δ' ἐρειψέντας ἔπειρος
Ἐστυμένως σύνεσθε πυρῆ, μεγάλα σοσαχίζων.
Ἐννέα τῷ γε ἄνακτι τεσσαρῆνες κύνες ποσα,
καὶ μὲν τὸ σύνεσθε πυρῆ δύο δειροτομήσας.
Διδέκα δὲ Τρώων μεγαθύμων γέας ἐθλάει
Χαλκῷ δηϊόων.

Iliad. Lib. 23. 173.

Addit equos et tela, quibus spoliaverat hostem.
Vinixerat et post terga manus, quos mitteret umbris
Inferias, cæso sparsuros sanguine flammarum;
Indutosque jubet trunco hostilibus armis
Ipsos ferre duces, inimicaque Nomine figi. AEn. 11. V. 80.

Has

Has the same Day, and the same impious Fight
 Consign'd with thee to Shades of endless Night
 The Brother-Kings? — then, *Oedipus*, we bear
 An equal Part in Sorrow and Despair:
 Yet how resembling are the Shades we moan, 125
 Witness, O Jove; to thee their Worth is known.
 Accept, sweet Youth, the First-fruits of my Reign,
 Nor these bright Ensigns of Command disdain;
 Which e'en Ambition's self might blush to wear,
 When purchas'd with the Price of Blood so dear. 130
 May proud *Eteocles* thy Pomp survey,
 And sicken at his alienated Sway.
 This said, his Crown and Scepter he resigns,
 And with redoubled Fury thus rejoins:
 Censure, who will; 'tis my Command, that none 135
 Shall mix their Burial-Rites with thine, my Son.
 O could I lengthen out their Sense of Pain,
 And drive from *Erebus* the *Grecians* slain!
 Yet Birds and Beasts shall on their Leader prey,
 And to the public Eye his Heart display. 140
 But *Sol* resolves them to their pristine State,
 And Earth conceals from my revengeful Hate.
 This Edict I repeat, that none offend
 Through Ignorance, or Ignorance pretend,

v. 137. *O could*] In this Address of *Creon* to his Son we may observe a Mixture of Tenderness and Ferocity, which is very consistent with and agreeable to his Character: and while we are displeased with the implacable Enemy, we should not withhold the Praise due to the loving and affectionate Parent. I think, this Behaviour is a sufficient Confutation of *Eteocles*'s Calumny in the preceding Book.

No Grief could move thee for *Menœcius*' Death,
 But rather Joy, he thus resign'd his Breath.

What

576 STATIUS's THEBAID. Book XII.

What Wretch but rear's a Tomb, or wills to rear,
 And makes the Relics of a Foe his Care; 146
 His Carcase shall the *Grecian's* Place supply:
 Attest, my Son, and ye that rule the Sky.
 He spoke; nor willing sought the legal Court.
 Meanwhile, assembled at the first Report 150
 Of *Creon's* Rage, the Dames of *Argive* Strain,
 Who wept their Fathers, and their Husbands slain,
 Attir'd as Mourners, or a captive Band,
 In sad Procession move along the Strand,
 All gash'd with Wounds: dishevel'd was their Hair,
 The same their Habit, and their Breasts were bare:
 From their torn Checks a crimson Current flows;
 And their soft Arms were swoln with cruel Blows;
Argia, senior of the fable Train,
 Whose fault'ring Steps two grieving Maids sustain, 160
 Majestically sad and slow precedes,
 And asks the Way, unknowing, where she leads.
 The Palace loath'd, her Sire no more at Heart,
 And all neglected, but her better Part;
 She dwells upon the Valour of her Spouse, 165
 And Love, tenacious of the Marriage-Vows:
 And *Thebes*, the Ruin of her Country's Host,
 Prefers to *Argos*, and th' *Inackian* Coast.
 To her the Consort of th' *Aetolian* Chief
 Succeeds, and equals in the Pomp of Grief 170
 Her Sister-Queen: with her a mingled Throng
 From *Calydon* and *Lerna* march along.
 More wretched, as she heard th' unworthy Fate
 Of *Menalippus*, and her Spouse's Hate.
 Yet she forgives, and, while she disapproves 175
 The flagrant Sin, the pleasing Sinner loves.

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Next came *Hippomedon*'s dejected Queen,
Of Manners soft, tho' savage was her Mien.
Then *Eripbyle*, who presumes in vain
By pompous Rites to wash away her Stain. 180
Diana's childless Comrade clos'd the Rear,
The fair *Mænalian* Nymphs beneath her Care;
With her *Evadne* pregnant: one exclaims
Against her daring Son's ambitious Aims:
But, mindful of her Spouse, and Parent *Mars*, 185
The other, stern in Tears, upbraids the Stars.
Chaste *Hecate* from the *Lycean* Grove
Beheld, and heav'd a Sigh; while as they rove
Along the double Shore, *Leucothea* spies,
And from her *Isthmian* Tomb loud-wailing cries. 190
Ceres, her private Woes in theirs forgot,
Held forth the mystic Torch, and wept their Lot.
E'en *Juno*, Partner of aerial Sway,
Conducts them through a safe, tho' secret Way,
Lest shou'd their People meet, th' Emprise be cross'd,
And all it's promis'd Fame and Glory lost. 196
Nor various *Iris* less employ'd her Care
To guard the Dead from putrefying Air:
O'er ev'ry tainted Limb with Skill she pours
Ambrosial Dews, and mystic Juices show'rs; 200
Lest, they decay before the Flames consume,
And their sad Friends consign them to the Tomb.

v. 197. *Nor various Iris*] This Fiction is borrowed from *Homer*, who introduces *Thetis* performing the same kind Office to the Body of *Patroclus*; though I think the Allegory is not so just and natural in the Imitation.

Πατρίκλω δ' αὐτὸν μεροσίλην καὶ νέκεαρ ἐρυθρὸν
Σταύρον καὶ πύρων, ἵνα οἱ χεῖσις ἐμπειδεῖσην.

Iliad. L. 19. V. 38.

O o

But

578 STADIUS'S THEBAID. Book XII.

But *Ornithus*, disabled in the Fray,
 And by his Troops deserted, takes his Way
 Thro' thick Recesses, that exclude the Light, 205
 Of *Sol*, a recent Wound impedes his Flight :
 Pale were his Cheeks with loss of Blood and Fear,
 His Steps supported by a broken Spear.
 Soon as he hears th' unwonted Tumult rise,
 And views the female Cohorts with Surprize ; 210
 Enquiries none he makes about their Woes,
 Nor ask the Reasons, which themselves disclose.
 But took the Word, and first his Silence broke,
 The Stream of Grief descending, as he spoke :
 Say, Wretches, whither haste ye ? what you are, 215
 And why this fun'ral Pageant you prepare ?
 When Day and Night commission'd Soldiers stand
 To guard the Shades by *Creon*'s harsh Command ;
 When inaccessible to all remain,
 But Birds and Beasts, the Bodies of the slain, 220
 Unwept and uninterr'd. — Will he relent
 His stubborn Soul by your Intreaties bent ?
 Believe me, sooner might your Pray'rs assuage
 Th' Egyptian Tyrant's Altars, and the Rage
 Of *Diomede*'s half-famish'd Steeds : or move 225
 Sicilian Gods, the Progeny of *Jove*.

v. 224. *Th' Egyptian Tyrant's*] *Busiris* King of *Egypt* was wont to sacrifice Strangers to his Gods ; but being overcome by *Hercules* underwent the same Fate.

Diomede King of *Thrace*, fed his Horses with human Flesh, and was slain by the above-mentioned Hero.

v 226. *Sicilian Gods*] *Laetantius* gives us the following Account of these Deities.

The Nymph *Ætna* having consented to the Embraces of *Jupiter* was pursued by *Juno*, and imploring the Assistance of the Earth was receiv'd into her Bosom, and bore two Twins, who for their Virtues

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If well I know the Man, perchance he'll dare
 To seize your Persons in the Act of Pray'r,
 And slaughter each not o'er her Husband's Corse,
 But distant far, unknowing of Remorse. 230

Retreat ye then, while yet secure you may,
 And when you reach again *Mycenæ*, pay
 A *Cenotaph*, the utmost that remains,
 While thus the breathless Heroes press the Plains.

Or will ye stay t' implore the passing Aid 235
 Of *Theseus*, who with Ensigns high display'd
 Returns in Triumph from *Thermodon*'s Shore,
 Clogg'd with the Dead, and red with female Gore?
 Arms must compel him to commence the Man,
 And form his Morals on a juster Plan. 240

He said: their Tears with Horror stand congeal'd,
 And Grief and Passion to Amazement yield;
 From ev'ry Face at once the Colour flies,
 And all their Ardor for th' Adventure dies.

Thus, when the Tiger's Howl (terrific Sound) 245
 Has reach'd the Herd in some capacious Ground,
 Thro' the whole Field a sudden Terror reigns;
 And all, forgetful of the grassy Plains,

Virtues were admitted into the Society of the Gods, and had divine Honours paid them, but they were only appeas'd with human Blood.

v. 233. *A Cenotaph*] This was a Kind of Mock-Funeral, and is thus described by *Virgil* in the 3d Book of his *Aeneid*;

Ante urbem in luco falfi Simoentis ad undam
 Libabat cineri Andromache, manesque vocabat
 Hectoreum ad tumulum, viridi quem cespite inanem
 Et geminas, causam lacrymis, sacraverat aras.

For a farther Account of this Ceremony see *Xenophon's Kypov Ayæcæus*, Lib. 6, and *Tacitus's Annals*, Lib. 1. & 11. and *Suetonius* in the Life of *Claudius*.

580 STADIUS'S THEBAID. Book XII.

Stand mute with Expectation, who shall please,
And first the Foe's rapacious Maw appease. 250

Forthwith a Series of Debates arose,
And various Schemes in Order they propose :
Some will, to *Thebes* that instant they repair,
And tempt the King by Blandishment and Pray'r ;
For Aid on *Theseus* others would rely : 255

But all disdain, nought enterpriz'd, to fly.
Not thus *Argia* with the rest despairs ;
With more than female Fortitude she bears
The News dissuasive, and, her Sex resign'd,
Attempts a Deed of the most daring Kind. 260

She glows with Hope of dangerous Applause,
Won by the Breach of *Creon*'s impious Laws,
And courts, what the most hardy *Thracian* Dame,
Tho' fenc'd with Virgin-Cohorts, would disclaim.

She meditates, by what fallacious Cheat, 265

Unnotic'd by the rest, she may retreat,
Rash and regardless of her Life thro' Grief,
And urg'd by Love of her much-injur'd Chief,
Or gain his dear Remains, or else provoke
The Tyrant to inflict a deadly Stroke. 270

In ev'ry Act and Character appear'd
Her Spouse confess ; one while a Guest rever'd,
Now at the Altars of the Pow'rs above,
And now the sweet Artificer of Love,
Then sheath'd in Arms, and quitting her Embrace, 275

With ling'ring Eyes, and Anguish in his Face.
Yet most that imag'd Form recurs to Sight,
Which, bare and naked from the Scene of Fight,
Demands the Pile. — disturb'd with Cares like these,
She sickens, and since nought her Griefs can ease 280

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Flies to grim Death: for yet untasted Rest,
(The chaste Ardour in a female Breast)

Then, turning to her *Argive* Comrades, cries:

Do you, in Favour of our just Emprise,
Sollicit *Theseus*, crown'd with hostile Spoils, 285
And may Success attend your pious Toils.

But suffer me, from whom alone arose
These grievous Ills and yet unequal'd Woes,

To penetrate the *Theban* Court, and prove
The menac'd Thunder of this earthly *Jove*. 290

Nor at our Entrance shall we find the Town

Inhospitable, or ourselves unknown;

My Husband's Sire and Sisters will defend
His wretched Widow and her Cause befriend.

Only retreat not; to these hostile Walls 295

My own Desire, an happy Omen, calls.

She ceas'd: and as a Partner of the Way,

Menætes took (beneath whose gentle Sway

Her youthful Age receiv'd an early Store

Of mental Charms, resign'd to Virtue's Lore) 300

And, though a Stranger to the Road, pursu'd

The Steps of *Ornitus*, distinctly view'd.

But, when impetuous as the driving Wind,

She'd left the Partners of her Woe behind.

Shall I, O much lov'd Source of Grief, (she cries) 305

While foul in Dust thy slighted Carcase lies,

Expect an Answer from th' *Athenian* King,

And wait for Aid, which he may never bring?

Or hesitate for Sanction from above,

To execute the Dictates of my Love? 310

While thy Remains decrease by this Delay.

Why do I yield not to the Birds of Prey

These

These viler Limbs ? and now alass ! if ought
 Of Sense survives, or Soul-engendred Thought,
 To Stygian Gods perchance thou dost complain, 315
 And wonder, what can thus thy Wife detain.
 Whether intomb'd, or bare beneath the Skies
 Thy Corse remains, on me th' Omision lies.
 No more then Death and *Creon* shall withstand :
 Nor Love and *Ornitus* in vain command. 320
 This said, she scours the *Megareian* Plain
 With rapid Pace, and seeks the small Domain.
 Of *Creon* ; each she meets, in Haste replies
 To her Demands, and turns aside his Eyes,
 Affrighted at her Garb. — thus on she goes, 325
 Of Aspect stern, confiding in her Woes :
 Alike intrepid in her Heart and Ear ;
 And, far from fearing; she inspires with Fear.
 In *Pbrygia* thus when *Dindymus* rebounds
 With Shrieks nocturnal, and with doleful Sounds, 330
 The frantic Leader of the Matrons flies
 To where the waves of *Simois* arise ;
 Whose sacred Blade the Goddess did bestow,
 What time with Wreaths she grac'd her awful Brow.
Hyperion now in western Deeps had hurl'd 335
 His flaming Car, and sought the nether World ;

v. 329. In *Pbrygia* thus when *Dindymus*] *Dyndimus* or *Dindyma* were two Mountains near *Ida* in *Pbrygia*, consecrated to *Cybele*, and famous for the Solemnization of her sacred Rites, as we learn from *Virgil*.

O vere Phrygiæ, neque enim Phryges ! ite per alta
Dindyma, ubi assuetis biforem dat tibia cantum.
 Tympana vos Buxusque vocant Berecynthia matris
 Ideæ. ————— *Aen.* 9. Verse 617.

When

When imperceptibly the tedious Day,
Beguil'd, by Toils of Sorrow, steals away.
Secure o'er darksome Meads, and Rocks, 'twixt Beams,
That totter to their Fall, thro' swelling Streams, 340
And Groves, that ne'er admit the piercing Rays
Of *Phæbus*, baffling his Meridian Blaze,
And Dykes, and Furrows of th' indented Field,
From her incurious Eyes by Night conceal'd,
Thro' the green Couch of Monsters, and the Den, 345
Possess'd by Beasts, and unexplor'd by Men,
Direct and unoppos'd she speeds her Flight:
No Toils fatigue her, and no Perils fright.
Menætes follows slow. —— Shame stings his Mind,
And wild Amazement to be left behind. 350
Where for Instruction did she not apply,
Whilst her chaste Bosom heav'd with many a Sigh?
Oft the Path lost, a devious Way she took,
When, her chief Solace, the bright Flames forsook
Her erring Feet, or the cold Shades of Night, 355
Back'd by the Wind, expell'd the guiding Light?
But when the Mount of *Pentheus* they descend,
And, weary, to the Vale their Footsteps bend;
Menætes, nearly spent, the Nymph address'd,
While frequent Pantings heav'd his aged Breast. 360
Not far (if Hope of the near finish'd Way
Flatters me not) the Champian I survey,
Where the fell Scene of Blood and Carnage lies,
And, intermix'd with Clouds, the Domes arise.
A noisome Stench pervades the steaming Air, 365
And rav'ous Birds in Flocks obscene repair.
This is the fatal Plain, the Seat of War;
Nor is the Town of *Cadmus* distant far.

See

See, how the Field projects the length'ning Shade
 Of Walls, upon its surface wide display'd, 370
 While dying *Vulcan* faintly shines between
 From the Watch-Tow'r, and swells the solemn Scene !
 The Night was late more still, the Stars alone
 Cast a faint Lustre round her ebon Throne.
 So spake *Menætes*; and the trembling Fair 375
 With Hands extended thus addrest her Pray'r :
 O *Thebes*, once fought with more than vulgar Toil,
 Though hostile now, again a friendly Soil,
 Should *Creon* deign to render back entire
 My Lord's Remains, to feed the fun'ral Fire : 380
 View, with what Pomp, what Follo'wers at her Call,
 The wife of *Polynices* seeks thy Wall !
 Full modest is my Suit, nor hard the Task
 To gratify : my Spouse is all I ask ;
 My Spouse long outlaw'd, and expos'd to Want, 385
 (His Throne usurp'd) to my Entreaties grant.
 Nor linger thou in *Pluto*'s griesly Dome,
 If ought of Form subsist, and Phantoms roam ;

v. 369. *See, how the Field*] This Description is scarce inferior to any in the whole Work. It is as beautiful a Night-Piece as can be found in Poetry. The Shade of the Walls projecting into the Field before the City, the Light on the Watch-Towers breaking out by Fits here and there, and the Stillness of the Night present a fine Picture to the Imagination. The Colouring is so strong, that one may almost fancy seeing the disconsolate Princess walking under the Walls, and deliberating how to act.

v. 388. *If ought of Form subsist*] Mr. Pope's Note on the following Verses of Homer

Ω τοποι, ηράτις ἐστὶ καὶ εἰν Αἰδαο δομοῖσιν
 Ψυχὴ καὶ εἰδῶλον, ἀταξ φρεατας σὺν τοῖς παριπατεν.

will throw a good Deal of Light on this Matter.

This

But if thy Favours I deserve, precede,
And to thy earthly Part thy Consort lead. 390

She said ; and haft'ning to a neighb'ring Cot,
Some simple Swain's secure, tho' slender Lot,
Repairs her Torch extinguish'd by the Wind,
And rushes forwards, turbulent of Mind.

Such was the Search, that pensive *Ceres* made, 395
(Her Child convey'd to the *Tartarean* Shade)

This Passage will be clearly understood, by explaining the Notion which the Ancients entertain'd of the Souls of the departed, according to the forecited triple Division, or Mind, Image and Body. They imagin'd, that the Soul was not only separated from the Body at the Hour of Death, but that there was a farther Separation of the φρεν, or Understanding from its Εἰδωλον, or Vehicle ; so that the Εἰδωλον, or Image of the Body, being in Hell, the φρεν or Understanding might be in Heaven : and that this is a true Explanation is evident from a Passage in the *Odyssey*. B. 11. V. 600.

Τὸν δὲ μετ' εἰσεγονοῦ βίην, Ήρακλησιν
Εἰδωλον. αὐτὸς δὲ μετ' ἀθανατοῖς θεοῖς
Τερπταῖς θαλίης, οὐ ἔχει κακλισφυρον οὐδὲν.

By this it appears that *Homer* was of Opinion that *Hercules* was in Heaven, while his Εἰδωλον, or Image was in Hell : so that when this second Separation is made, the Image or Vehicle becomes a meer thoughtless Form.

We have this whole Doctrine very distinctly deliver'd by *Plutarch* in these Works : " Man is a compound Subject : but not of two Parts, as is commonly believ'd, because the Understanding is generally accounted a Part of the Soul ; whereas indeed it as far exceeds the Soul, as the Soul is diviner than the Body. " Now the Soul, when compounded with the Understanding, makes Reason, and when compounded with the Body, Passion : whereof the one is the Source or Principle of Pleasure or Pain, the other of Vice or Virtue. Man therefore properly dies two Deaths ; the first Death makes him two of three, and the second makes him one of two."

Plutarch of the Face in the Moon.

See *Homer's Iliad*, Volum. 2. Lib. 22.

With

With Lamp in Hand, whose well-reflected Light
 Varied each Side, with Rays alternate bright,
 She trac'd the Chariot-Ruts, distinctly view'd,
 And Step by Step the Ravisher purfu'd. 400

Th' imprison'd Giant echoes back again
 Her frantic Shrieks, and lightens all the Plain
 With bursting Fire from the *Vulcanian Hall* ;
 And Rivers, Forests, Hills, and Vallies call
Persephone : the Court of *Dis* alone 405
 Is silent midst the universal Groan.

Her Friend reminds her oft of *Creon*'s Ire,
 And warns to hide the interdicted Fire.

Thus she, who reign'd o'er many a *Grecian* Town,
 With ev'ry Virtue, that adorns a Crown, 410
 In War redoubted, and in Peace belov'd,
 Admir'd for Beauty, and for Worth approv'd,
 Amidst the dreary Horrors of the Night,
 Without a social Guide, her Foes in Sight,
 Undaunted strays thro' Meadows cover'd o'er 415
 With deathful Arms, and slippery with Gore,
 While injur'd Ghosts flit round her, and demand
 Their Limbs disjoin'd, and scatter'd on the Strand.
 Oft as the lifeless Bodies are explor'd
 With curious Inquest, on the Spear or Sword 420
 She treads unheeding, all her Thoughts employ'd
 Her Lord's mistaken Relics to avoid
 Now leaning o'er the Carcasses, she strains
 Her Eyes, and of the Want of Light complains ;

v. 424. *And of the Want of Light complains*] *Laetantius*, contrary to the general Practice of Commentators, convicts *Statius* of a slip of his Memory in representing *Argia* without a Torch, and presently

When *Juno*, who, to save her chosen Race, 425
 Had stolen from the Thunderer's Embrace,
 And, taking all Advantage of the Time,
 Shot down to *Athens* from th' aerial Clime,
 To move the Mind of *Pallas*, and prepare
 The City to receive each suppliant Fair ; 430
 Beheld th' *Inachian* Princess, as in vain
 She toil'd erroneous on the spacious Plain,
 And, grieving at the Sight, awhile resign'd
 To Pity's gentle Lore her tender Mind :
 And, stopping near the Sister of the Sun 435
 Her Chariot, thus in Accents mild begun.
 At *Cynthia*'s Hands if *Juno* claim Regard,
 Her Merit with a due Return reward.
 For Night prolong'd, to crown a vicious Flame,
 And other Insults, I forbear to name, 440

sently after hinting that she had one ; condemning him from his own Words.

— Aliamque ad busta ferebat

Antigone miseranda facem —— Verse 349.
 How (says he) could *Antigone* be said to bear another Torch, unless *Argia* had one before. But this is a mere critical Cavil. — *Argia* might have a Torch at the Time the Poet mentions, though not before. It may then be asked, why the Poet did not tell us of it ? — To this I answer, that it was needless he should inform us of it, unless he could do it without seeming desirous of it, and going out of his Subject on Purpose.

v. 439. For Night prolong'd] *Jupiter*, having lain with *Alcmena* in the Form of her Husband *Amphitryon*, thinking the Space of one Night insufficient for his Pleasures, order'd the Moon to make it as long as three, which (we find from this Speech of *Juno*) she complied with. — *Laetantius*.

Ovid also takes Notice of it in *Dejanira's Epistle to Hercules*.

At non ille velit, cui Nox (si creditur) una
 Non tanti, ut tantus conciperere, fuit.

Grant

Grant my Request, and by Compliance shun
The Wrath incur'd for Crimes already done.
See, circumfus'd in Night *Argia* strays,
A Dame as worthy of our Aid as Praise !
In vain she toils around th' ensanguin'd Field, 445
Until thy stronger Rays Assistance yield.
Exert thy Horns, and, nearer in thy Course,
Shine down on Earth with more than wonted Force ;
While Sleep, who guides thy Chariot thro' the Skies,
Descends to close each watchful *Theban*'s Eyes. 450
Scarce had she spoke, when from a bursting Cloud
The Goddess held her Orb forth midst a Crowd
Of lesser Stars, and gilds the dewy Plains :
The dazzling Lustre *Juno* scarce sustains.
The Princess viewing now, recalls to Thought 455
The purple Robe, her skilful Hands had wrought,
Altho' the Texture was effac'd with Gore,
Nor the bright Hue so vivid as before ;
And while she calls on Heav'n in plaintive Strains,
And fears; that this small Gift alone remains 460
To grace his Obsequies, and future Bust,
She sees his Body trampled in the Dust.
Forthwith her Speech, her Sight, her Motion flies,
And Grief suspends the Torrent in her Eyes.

v. 463. *Forthwith her Speech*] Mr. Dryden in his Poem on the Death of *Charles the Second* has some fine Lines, that very nearly resemble our Author's.

Thus long my Grief has kept me dumb :
Sure there's a Lethargy in mighty Woe,
Tears stand congeal'd, and cannot flow ;
And the sad Soul retires into her inmost Room :
Tears, for a stroke foreseen, affords Relief ;
But unprovided for a sudden Blow,
Like *Niobe*, we Marble grow ;
And petrify with Grief. Then

Then grov'ling o'er the Slain, with warm Embrace
 She clasp'd his Limbs, and kiss'd his clay-cold Face; 466
 And from his stiff'ning Hair, and costly Vest
 The clotted Gore with Care assiduous press'd.
 Her Voice returning, on her Spouse she roll'd
 Her Eyes, and cry'd: — Art thou, whom I behold 470
Adraustus' Heir, and Leader of the Fight,
 In bold Assertion of a Monarch's Right?
 And do I thus array'd thy Triumphs meet?
 See, see *Argia* seeks a safe Retreat
 At *Thebes*. — O lead her then within the Walls 475
 To thy paternal Roof, and regal Halls;
 And seize th' Occasion, which she gives, to prove
 Thy grateful Sense of her experienc'd Love.
 Alas! what do I ask? — a slender Spot
 Of native Earth is all my Consort's Lot. 480
 For what this Quarrel then, and impious Fray?
 Forbid it Heav'n's, his Brother e'er should sway.
 Weeps not *Jocasta*, tender-hearted Dame?
 Where is *Antigone*, so known to Fame?
 Fate wills then, thou shou'dst lie for me alone, 485
 To torture me, in cruel Fight o'erthrown.
 In vain I said; ah! whither dost thou fly
 For Crowns, and Scepters, which the Gods deny?
 Let *Argive* Honours bound thy rash Desire,
 Nor thus beyond what Fortune grants aspire. 490
 Yet why do I complain? — I gave the Sword,
 And my sad Sire in thy Behalf implor'd,
 To find thee thus. — Yet will I not repine;
 Resign'd to your Decrees, O Pow'r's divine!
 His Relics by your Aid obtain'd repay 495
 The Toils and anxious Sorrows of the Way.

Alas!

Alas ! with what a Gape descends the Wound ;
 Was this his Brother ? on what Spot of Ground
 Lies the fell Murd'rer ? — could I know the Way,
 I'd rob the Beasts, and Vultures of their Prey. 500
 But he perhaps enjoys a decent Pyre ;
 And shalt thou mourn the Want of ritual Fire ?
 Ah ! no. — With equal Honours shalt thou burn,
 And Tears rain copious o'r the golden Urn,
 To Kings deny'd : thy Tomb for e'er shall prove 505
 The pleasing Duty of my widow'd Love ;
 And young *Theſſander* to thy Bed succeed,
 A Witness to the Woes, on which I feed.
 Behold *Antigone* with trembling Hand
 Bears for the furtive Rites another Brand, 510
 Shares all the Woe, and heaves the distant Groan
 Scarce could she gain an Egress from the Town :
 For *Creon* ever wary, to retard
 The Breach of his Command, increas'd the Guard
 So that more oft revolves the watching-Hour, 515
 And thicker burns the Fire on ev'ry Tow'r.
 Her Brother therefore, and the Gods she prays,
 To speed her Flight, and pardon her Delays ;
 And, frantic, rushes from the silent Walls,
 While drowsy *Morpheus* on the Sentry falls. 520
 With such a Bound along the Meadow springs
 The Virgin-Lioness, when Anger wings

v. 514. *And young Theſſander*] This is an Allusion to the famous Speed of *Dido* in the fourth Book of *Virgil's Aeneid*.

Saltem si qua mihi de te suscepta fuisset
 Ante fugam Soboles ; si quis mihi parvulus aula
 Luderet *Aeneas*, qui te tantum ore referret.

Barthius

Her

Her rapid Progress, or when Hopes of Prey
Allure her from her shady Den away.

Nor a long time elaps'd, before she gain'd 525
The Place by *Polynices*' Blood distain'd.

Menætes meets her traversing the Plains,
And his dear Pupil's deep-fetch'd Groans restrains.
But, when the growing Noise had reach'd the Ear
Of the sad Virgin all erect thro' Fear; 530

And by the Torches Light, and friendly Rays
Of *Cynthia*, more distinctly she surveys
Argia's bloody Face, dishevel'd Hair,
And sable Vest she thus bespeaks the Fair:

Say, daring Wretch, what Chief o'erthrown in Fight
Thou seek'st, encroaching on my proper Right? 536

To this she nought replies, but o'er her Spouse,
And her own Face a sable Veil she throws,
For Fear at first her ev'ry Thought possest,
And Grief awhile forsook her tender Breast. 540

This Length of Silence but the more increas'd
The Dame's Surmise, nor her Enquiries ceas'd:
Her Comrade then she presses, while they gaze,
With Horror fixt, and silent with Amaze:

At length the Princess thus her Silence broke, 545
And, clasping in her Arms the Body, spoke.

If, in the Search of some Relation slain,
Thou roamest, darkling, thro' the bloody Plain,
And fearest angry *Creon*'s stern Decree,
My secret Purpose I reveal to thee. 550

If thou art wretched (as thy Tears avow)
Why join we not our Hands, and make a Vow
Of Amity? — *Adraustus*' Daughter I,
Hopeful by Stealth, and mutual Secrecy,

My *Polynices*' poor Remains to burn, 555
 And close his Ashes in a precious Urn :
 But who art thou ? —— Astonish'd with Surprize,
 The *Theban* Damsel, trembling, thus replies.
 Me then (O Ignorance of human Race !)
 Me dost thou fear, and hold in thy Embrace 560
 My Brother's Limbs, unwilling to disclose ?
 To thee, the tender Partner of my Woes,
 The friendly Task with Blushes I resign,
 And own my luke-warm Love excell'd by thine.
 Thus she. — When, grov'ling with disorder'd Charms
 Around the Prince, they fold him in their Arms ; 566
 Their falling Tears, and Hair together blend,
 (While eagerly to kiss him they contend)
 And with mix'd Groans their Lips by Turns employ
 On his dear Face and Neck, and share the Joy. 570
 A Brother one, and one a Husband plains ;
 And *Thebes* and *Argos* in alternate Strains
 They sing : but most *Argia* calls to Mind
 Their num'rous Griefs, hard Lot and Fates unkind.
 By this our common Rite of secret Woe, 575
 Yon social Manes, and the Stars that glow

v. 575. *By this our common Rite*] Our Author, to put a finishing Stroke to the Characters of *Argia* and *Antigone*, presents us with an Interview between them, in which their Dispositions and Manners are conveyed to us through the Channel of Discourse. From a Comparison of the Conduct of these Ladies we may infer, that Love transcends natural Affection in a very eminent Degree. *Argia*, fearing lest her Sister should not persevere in assisting at the funeral Rites of her Husband through Dread of Creon's Displeasure, tells her of his sincere Regard and Esteem, and prompts her to exert herself, without seeming to do it. —— The Art of the Poet is very visible on this Occasion.

In

In Heaven, conscious of the Truth, I swear,
 That never, when he breath'd our *Argive* Air,
 His dear, though absent, Sister scap'd his Thought
 Her only he desir'd, her only sought. 580

Whilst his lov'd Mother, and his native Clime,
 His Crown detain'd beyond th' allotted Time
 Without one Tear or Sigh were left behind,
 And I, a lesser Care, with Ease resign'd.

But thou perhaps from some huge Turret's Height
 Hast seen him toiling thro' the Ranks of Fight, 586

While, as with martial Air he strode along,
 With Eyes reverted from amidst the Throng,
 He wav'd his Sword, and bow'd his triple Crest,
 An Honour paid to those, he lov'd the best, 590

While we at Distance pin'd. — What God cou'd fire,
 The furious Pair to such Excess of Ire?
 Could not your Prayers move his stubborn Breast?
 And was a Sister's Suit in vain address'd?

Now had the Dame the woeful Fact disclos'd, 595

But thus their faithful Comrade interpos'd:
 Come on and first your Enterprize pursue:
 The Stars, retiring, wear a paler Hue,
 And Morn advances. — When the Work is sped,
 Then pour your boundless Sorrows o'er the Dead 600

Not far remote, *Ismenos* roll'd his Flood,
 Still foul with Slaughter, and distain'd with Blood.

v. 595. *Now had the Dame*] This seems an indirect Stroke on female Loquacity. The two Princesses, forgetful of the Object of their Enterprize, fall into a long Conversation, which in all Probability might have lasted till Day-light, had not their good Friend *Menætes* admonished them of their Duty.

Hither the feeble Pair by mutual Aid
 The Warrior's lacerated Corps convey'd,
 The little Strength he has, *Mænetes* lends, 605
 And to support the Load, his Arm extends.
 Thus *Phaeton*, from *Vulcan's* Fury sav'd,
 In *Po's* warm Stream his pious Sisters lav'd,
 To Trees transform'd, and sorrowing for his Doom,
 Ere scarce his smoaking Body fill'd the Tomb. 610
 Soon as They cleans'd their Brother in the Ford,
 And to their proper Form his Limbs restor'd,
 They print the parting Kiss on either Cheek,
 And Fire, to close the Rites, assiduous seek :
 But ev'ry Spark extinct, and Flame o'ercome 615
 By vap'ry Damps, desponding long they roam.
 Preserv'd by Chance, or Providence, there stood,
 Not distant far, a high-heap'd Pile of Wood :
 Whether some Fiend the Fires discordant spar'd,
 Or Nature for new Prodigies prepar'd, 620
 Is yet unsaid, the Cause remains unknown :
Eteocles upon the Top was thrown.
 Here they perceive a slender Gleam of Light
 From sable Oaks, and joyful at the Sight,
 In Haste implore the unknown Shade, who claims 625
 The Structure, to divide the grateful Flames
 With *Polynices*, nor disdain to burn
 On the same Pyre, and share one common Urn.
 Again behold the Brothers ! — When the Fire
 Pervades their Limbs in many a curling Spire, 630

v. 607. *Thus Phaeton*] The Story of *Phaeton's* Fall from Heaven is too well known to be enlarged upon in a Note. See *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Lib. 2. Fable 1.

v. 629. *Again behold the Brothers!*] This Fiction is very properly inserted, and if it is not the Poet's Invention, does great Honour

The vast Pile trembles, and th' Intruder's Corse
Is driven from the Pile with sudden Force;
The Flames, dividing at the Points, ascend,
And at each other adverse Rays extend.

Thus, when the Ruler of th' infernal State 635
(Pale-visag'd *Dis*) commits to stern Debate

The Sister-Fiends, their Brands, held forth to Fight,
Now clash, then part, and shed a transient Light.

The very Beams disjoin before their Eyes:
With Hell-bred Terrors smit, each Virgin cries: 640
Through our default then do the Flames engage,
And have our Hands renew'd fraternal Rage?

For who however cruel in the Fray,
Wou'd drive an injur'd *Theban*'s Shade away?

But our *Eteocles*? —— The Shield I know, 645
And half-burnt Girdle of the Brother Foe.

Mark, how the Fire recedes, then joins again!
Deep fixt as erst their Enmities remain.

Fruitless the War! In vain afresh they join
In fight: O Tyrant, for the Palm is thine: 650
Whence then this useless Rage, this martial Heat,
When he usurps the Crown, and regal Seat?
Resign your Threats; and thou, the younger, bend,
Nor more for alienated Sway contend.

nour to his Judgment. Such Traits of the Marvellous have a fine Effect in Poetry. *Lucan* has imitated it in his Account of the Prodigies that ushered in the civil War between *Cæsar* and *Pompey*. *Pharsalia*, Lib. 1.

— Vestali raptus ab arâ
Ignis, et ostendens confectas flamma Latinas
Scinditur in partes, geminoque cacumine surgit,
Thebanos imitata rogos. —

596 STADIUS's THEBAID. Book XII.

At our joint Suit O close the direful Scene ; 655
 Or, to prevent your Rage, we rush between.
 Scarce had she spoke, when with a rumbling Sound
 The Field and lofty Houses shook around :
 The Pile yawn'd wider, and his Slumbers broke,
 From Dreams of Woe the starting Soldier woke, 660
 And, running o'er the Plain, with naked Sword
 Each secret Pass and Avenue explor'd.
Menætes only dreads th' advancing Band ;
 While they before the Pyre, undaunted, stand,
 Avow the Breach of *Creon*'s harsh Decree, 665
 And lift the Shout of Triumph, as they see
 Their Brother's Body to the Flames a Prey,
 And ev'ry mould'ring Limb consum'd away.
 If ought disturbs the Tenour of their Mind,
 'Tis but the Fear, that *Creon* should be kind 670
 They both dispute, whose Labours merit most
 Of Glory, and the Crime alternate boast.
 I brought the Corse, and I the Structure fir'd,
 Me Love (they cry) me Piety inspir'd.
 The cruel Punishment thus each demands, 675
 And thro' the Chains, delighted, thrusts her Hands.
 No more that Caution to offend remains,
 Nor mutual Reverence their Stile restrains :
 Both angry seem, such jarring Clamors rise
 On either Side, and rend the vaulted Skies. 580

v. 669. *If ought*] The Magnanimity of these two Heroines is equal to any thing recorded of the fair Sex both in Fable and History. One cannot but cry out with *Tasso*.

O Spettacolo grande, ove à tenzone
 Sono Amore, e magnanima Virtute !
 Ove la morte al vincitor si pone
 In premio, e'l mal del vinto è la Salute !

The

The Guards, who seiz'd them, are dispatch'd to Court,
Before the King the Matter to report.

But *Pallas* ushers in the female Band
To the *Cecropian* Town, at the Command
Of *Juno*, crowns their Sorrows with Applause, 685
And interests the People in their Cause.

Their Hands with Boughs, their Foreheads she supplies
With Wreaths, and teaches them in humble Guise
To veil their Face, the suppliant Knee to bend,
And empty Urns to public View extend. 690
Of ev'ry Age a Crowd of Gazers roams,
Some seek the Streets, and others mount their Domes:
From whence this Swarm of wretched Dames (they
cry)

Why flows the Tear, and heaves the broken Sigh?
In Concert, ere they learn the Cause, they groan. 695
The Goddess, mixt with either Train, makes known
The Object of their Suit, their native Land,
And whom they mourn, and answers each Demand.
On all Occasions they themselves disclose
The Source and Origin of all their Woes, 700
And, murmur'ring out th' inhuman Tyrant's Law,
In Throngs around a vulgar Audience draw.
Thus from their Nests the *Thracian* Birds complain
In broken Notes, and many a twitt'ring Strain,

v. 703. *Thus from their Nests*] *Tereus*, King of *Thrace*, having married *Progne*, the Daughter of *Pandion* King of *Athens*, and ravished her Sister *Philomela*, cut out her Tongue, and shut her up in a Prison, where she wrote the Story in Needle-Work, and sent it to her Sister. *Progne* was transform'd to a Swallow, and *Philomela* to a Nightingale. — We had a Simile drawn from this Bird in the 8th Book. I do not like the Repetition; but think it much more tolerable than one in the fifteenth Book of the *Iliad*, which is copied verbatim from one in the sixth: I mean that of a Horse set

To Strangers when th' incestuous Rape they sing, 705
 And wail th' Injustice of the lustful King.
 There stood as in the Centre of the Town
 An Altar, sacred to the Poor alone;
 Here gentle Clemency has fix'd her Seat:
 And none but Wretches hallow the Retreat. 710
 A Train of Votaries she never wants:
 And all Requests and Suits, impartial, grants.
 Whoe'er implore, a speedy Audience gain;
 And open Night and Day her Gates remain:
 That Misery might ever find Acces 715
 And by Complaints alone obtain Redress.
 Nor costly are her Rites: no Blood she claims
 From slaughter'd Victims, nor odorous Flames;
 Her Altars sweat with Tears; and Wreaths of Woe,
 Her Suitors, tearing from their Hair, bestow, 720
 Or Garments in her Fane are left behind,
 When Fortune shifts the Scene, to her resign'd.
 A Grove surrounds it, where in shadowy Rows
 The Laurel Tree and suppliant Olive grows.
 No well-wrought Effigy her Likeness bears, 725
 Her imag'd Form no sculptur'd Metal wears:

set at Liberty and ranging the Pastures: whereas our Author has varied his Language and the Circumstances of the Comparison.

v. 709. *Here gentle Clemency*] Chaucer, who in his *Palamon and Arcite* has taken great Liberties with our Author, and almost transcribed some Passages (as will be seen in the Sequel) mentions the *Argive* Ladies entering this Temple.

Here in this Temple of the Goddesse Clemence,
 We have been waitng all this fourtenight: &c.

There is a vast Luxuriance of Fancy, as well as Propriety display'd in this Description. The Building, Sacrifices, and Votaries are such as are highly consistent with the Nature of the thing, and Character of this Goddess.

In

In human Breasts resides the Pow'r divine,
 A constant Levee trembling at her Shrine.
 The Place, deform'd with Horrors not its own,
 To none but Objects of Distress is known.

730

Fame says, the Sons of great *Alcides* rear'd
 The Fane, in Honour of the Pow'r rever'd
 (A Temple to their Father first decreed)
 But Fame diminishes the glorious Deed.

'Tis juster to believe, the Pow'rs above,
 Of whose Protection, and parental Love
 Fair *Athens* shar'd a more than equal Part,
 The Pile erected, not a Mortal's Art ;
 That Mercy might, by rushing in between
 Offended Justice, and th' Offender screen

740

The guilty Wretch : — for this the Structure rose,
 A common Refuge in the greatest Woes.

No human Blood th' unspotted Pavement stains ;
 But threat'ning Vengeance with her clanking Chains,
 And Instruments of Anger, howls aloof,

745

Nor Fortune frowns beneath this hallow'd Roof.

Through all the Globe is this Asylum known.

Here Kings depos'd, and Chiefs in War o'erthrown,
 And those, whose Error was their only Crime,
 Convene, repairing from each distant Clime.

750

This hospitable Goddess soon o'ercame
 The Rage of *Oedipus*, whose vengeful Flame

v. 752. *The Rage of Oedipus*] *Oedipus*, being expell'd *Thebes*, by the Command of *Creon*, fled to *Colonos*, where there was a Temple consecrated to the Furies, but was taken thence by the *Athenians*, and very hospitably entertained. *Aristophanes* wrote a Tragedy on this Subject. *Lactantius*.

The

600 STADIUS'S THEBAID. Book XII.

The Furies kindled ; and *Orestes* freed
 From the fell Horrors of the murd'rous Deed.
 Hither the pensive Dames of *Lerna* come, 755
 Conducted by a Crowd : before the Dome
 A Train of Pilgrims stood, but all give Way.
 Soon as more pleasing Thoughts their Cares allay,
 They shout aloud. — Thus when a well-rang'd Host
 Of feather'd Cranes survey the *Pharian* Coast, 760
 They stretch their Necks, and clapping, as they fly,
 Their Wings expanded, shade a Length of Sky :
 Such is their Joy to scape the Winter's Reign,
 And share in *Nile* the Summer-Heats again.
 Now *Theseus*, grac'd with Conquest and Renown 765
 From *Scythian* Battels, seeks th' *Athenian* Town.
 A Pair of snow-white Steeds his Chariot draws,
 His Chariot wreath'd with Laurels, while th' Applause
 Of shouting Thousands, and pacific Sound
 Of breathing Clarions wafts his Praise around 770
 To swell the Pomp, before the Chief are borne
 The Spoils and Trophies from the vanquish'd torn ;
 The Car, the Pageant charg'd with many a Crest,
 The sorrowing Steed, with Trappings gayly drest,
 The Pole-Axe, wont to lay the Forest low, 775
 And thin *Mæotis*, the well-polish'd Bow,
 The Quiver light, the Girdle studded o'er
 With Gems, and Shield deform'd with female Gore.
 But they, intrepid still, their Sex disclose,
 And in no vulgar Groans express their Woes ; 780

v. 759. *A well-rang'd Host*] The Cranes in their Flight (as here from a colder to a warmer Climate) usually kept in the Form of one of these three Greek Letters Δ Λ or γ , unless the Violence of the Wind, or any other Accident broke their Order.

To

To sue for Life unworthily disdain,
 And seek the martial Virgin's holy Fane.
 The reigning Passion now is to behold
 The Victors, glitt'ring with *Barbaric* Gold :
 But most *Hippolyte* their Notice drew, 785
 No longer frowning, but serene to view,
 And reconcil'd to Nuptial-Rites. — they gaze
 Askance, with Looks expressive of Amaze,
 And mutter out their Wonder, that she broke
 Her Country's Laws, and patient of the Yoke, 790
 With artful Braiding trick'd her auburn Hair,
 And veil'd her Sun-burnt Bosom, whilom bare ;
 That, pleas'd, she mixes in the gaudy Show,
 And brooks th' Embraces of an *Attic* Foe.
 By slow Degrees the Suppliants quit the Fane, 795
 And, standing full in Prospect of the Train,

v. 785. *Hippolyte*] *Bernartius* gives Himself much trouble about the Name of this Lady of *Theseus*, and endeavours to prove from a Passage in *Pausanias*, that it was not *Hippolyte*, but *Antiope*. But as what he advances is very dry and tedious, and as the Subject itself is not interesting (a Poet not being tied down to historical Precision) I shall take no farther Notice of it, as the Reader may see it at large in the Variorum Edition by *Veenbusen*.

v. 795. *By slow Degrees*] So *Chaucer*.

This Duke, of whom I make mencioune,
 When he was come almost to the Town
 In all his well and his most Pride,
 He was ware, as he cast his Eye aside,
 Where that there kneled in the high Wey
 A Companis of Ladies, twey and twey :
 Each after other clad in Clothes blacke,
 But such a crie and such a Woe they make,
 That in this World nys Creature living
 That ever heard such a waimenting :
 And of this Crie they would never stenten,
 Till they the Reines of his bridell henten.

Admire

Admire the Triumph, and recall to Mind,
 Their Husbands, to the Fowls of Air resign'd.
 The Coursers halting, from his Chariot's Height
 The Monarch lean'd, and, musing at the Sight, 800
 Inquires the Cause. — To his Demand replied
 The Wife of *Capaneus*, and boldly cried.
 O valiant *Theseus*, of whose future Praise,
 And Glory, Fortune on our Ruins lays

v. 803. *O valiant Theseus*] It will not I apprehend, be an un-
 pleasing Task to the Reader to compare this Speech with the last
 quoted Author's on the same Subject.

The oldest Ladie of them all spake,
 Whan she had souned with a deadlie chere,
 That it was ruth for to see and here :
 She said, Lord to whom Fortune hath yene
 Victory, and a Conqueror to live ;
 Nought greveth us your Glory and Honour,
 But we bespeke you of Mercy and Socour.
 And have Mercy on our Wo and Distresse,
 Some drop of Pity through the Gentilnesse
 Upon us wretched Wymen let thou fall.
 For certes, Lord, there nys none of us all
 That shene hath been a Dutchesse or a Quene,
 Nor be we Caytifs, as it is well ifene :
 Thanked be Fortune, and her false Whele
 That none Estate assureth for to be well.
 Now certes, Lord, to abyde your Presence,
 Here in this Temple of the Goddesse Clemence,
 We have be waiting all this fourtenight :
 Helpe us, Lord, sith it lieth in thy Might.
 I Wretch, that wepe and waile thus
 Whilom Wife to King *Capaneus*,
 That starfe at *Thebes*, cursed be the Day,
 And all we that ben in this Array,
 And maken all this Lamentation
 We losten all our Husbondes at that Town,
 While that the Siege thereabout laie ;
 And yet the old *Creon* (wel awaie)
 That Lord is nowe of *Thebes* Cite,

BOOK XII. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 603

The Basis, deem us not a guilty Train 805
For Crimes far exil'd, or of foreign Strain :
Since all of us attain'd the Rank before
Of royalty, and rul'd th' *Inachian* Shore,
The Wives of Kings, who met an early Grave
In *Theban* Wars, unfortunately brave. 810
Tho' griev'd, we cannot of their Deaths complain,
For this the Laws and Chance of Arms ordain.
Not were they Centaurs, or of monstrous Birth,
The Sport of Nature, and the Dregs of Earth.
To wave their Race, and glorious Ancestry, 815
Suffice it, noble *Theseus*, that with thee
They bore a manly Form, a thinking Mind,
And all the Properties of human Kind :
Yet *Creon*, ruthless as the King of Hell,
And, as th' infernal Boatsman, stern and fell, 820
To breathless Carcasses extends his Ire,
Nor grants the last sad Honours of the Pyre :
Beneath the doubtful Axle of the Sky,
And *Erebus*, unburied still they lie.
Alas ! O Nature, how art thou debas'd ! 825
Through our Defaults insulted and disgrac'd.

Fulfilled of Yre, and of Iniquite,
He for Dispute, and for his Tiranny
To done the Deed Bodies Villanie,
Of all our Lords, which that benslawe
Hath all the Bodies on an Heape idrawe ;
And will not suffer them by none Assent
Neither to be buried, ne to be brent
But maketh Hounds to eat hem in Dispite.
And with that Word without more Respite
They fallen grofely, and crien piteously,
Have on us wretched Wymen some Mercie
And let our Sorowe finke in thine Hert.

Where

Where now is *Athens*? where the Gods above?
 Why sleeps the Thunder-bolt of partial Jove.
 Meanwhile the sev'nth bright Harbinger of Day
 Turns far from *Thebes* her orient Steeds away. 830
 The Stars, that gild yon spangled Sphere with Light,
 Avert their Rays, and sicken at the Sight.
 The very Birds, and Monsters of the Wood
 Abhor th' ill-scented Field, and noisome Food,
 From the corrupted Blood such Streams arise, 835
 Taint the fresh Gale, and poison half the Skies.
 Nought save the putrid Gore to burn remains,
 And naked Bones, that whiten all the Plains.
 Haste, venerable Sons of *Cecrops*, haste
 To lay the Realms of haughty *Creon* waste: 840
 Such Vengeance well becomes you haste before
 He pours his Fury on the *Thracian* Shore,
 Before each Nation shares an equal Fate,
 And Millions rot beneath his impious Hate.
 For say, what Lengths will bound his lawless Rage,
 If Thoughts of Vengeance yet his Breast engage?
 'Tis true, they fought, and vanquish'd press'd the
 Plains,
 Yet why should he pursue their cold Remains?
 Not thus thy Wrath, as Fame reports the Deed,
 Base *Sinis* to his Brother *Brutes* decreed; 850

v. 850. *Base Sinis*] *Sinis*, *Cercyon* and *Scyron* were notorious Robbers, whom this Hero killed, of the former *Pausania* in his *Corinthiacs* gives the following Account. "In the *Isthmus* there is "a Place, where *Sinis*, the Robber, bending the Branches of se- "veral Pines to the Ground, bound the Wretches that he over- "came, to them in such a Manner, that when the Trees unbent "themselves, they tore their Bodies to Pieces. He was punished "in the same Way by *Theseus*."

Propertius

But, as thy valour great, thy Pity gave
Him and his ill-deserving Peers a Grave.

Thy Piety, I ween, the Foe admires,
And *Tanais* shines bright with frequent Fires.

No wonder then, the Pow'rs of Battel bless 855

Thy dreaded Arms with more than hop'd Succes,

Yet Oh what Wreaths thy Forehead should adorn,

More glorious, than the Palm of Conquest borne.

Woud'st thou but grace the Dead with Obsequies,
And ease the Realms of *Dis*, the Earth, and Skies. 860

If *Crete*, and thy own *Marathonian* Plain

Thou freed'st, nor the sage Matron wept in vain,

O grant our Suit: so thro' th' ensanguin'd Field

May *Pallas* guide thee, and from Danger shield;

Nor *Hercules* with envious Hate pursue 865

Thy equal Feats: but may thy Mother view

An endless Round of Triumphs, nor the State

Of *Athens* prove at any Time our Fate:

She said and ceas'd. with Hands upheld the rest

Ecco her Shrieks, and second her Request. 870

Propertius alludes to this Fact. Book 3d.

Arboreasque cruces Sinis et non hospita Graüs
Saxa, et curvatas in sua fata trabes.

See *Plutarch* likewise in the Life of *Theseus*.

Bernartius.

v. 854. *And Tanais]* *Tanais* was a famous River in the Country
of the *Amazons*.

v. 861. *If Crete, and &c.]* He killed the *Marathonian* Bull, and
Minotaure of *Crete*.

v. 869. *Sbe said and ceas'd]* Let us see what *Chaucer* says.

This gentil Duke downe from his Horse stert,
With Hert piteous, when he herd hem speke.
Him thought that his Hert woulde breke.
Whan he saw hem so piteous and so mate
That whilom were of so grete Estate:

And

At this the Stream of Grief begins to flow,
 And his wet Cheeks with rising Blushes glow.
 But soon his Tears are dried in vengeful Flames ;
 And, fir'd with just Resentment, he exclaims.
 What Fury thus deforms the moral Plain 675
 Of Kings, and in the Monster sinks the Man ?
 Thank Heav'n, my Virtue is not left behind,
 Nor with my Climate have I chang'd my Mind.
 Whence this new Phrenzy, *Creon* ? hast thou thought
 My Spirits broken with the Toils I wrought ? 880
 I come, I come, unwearied as before :
 And my Spear thirsts for thy devoted Gore.
 Then quick, my faithful *Phegeus*, turn thy Steed,
 And bear to *Creon* this my Will decreed,
 ' *Thebes*, or the *Grecian* Carcasses shall burn : ' 885
 Go, and prevent our Hopes with thy Return.
 This said, forgetful of his recent Toils,
 He chears his Troops to fight with promis'd Spoils
 And heals their Strength impair'd.—Thus when again
 The Victor-Bull recovers his Domain, 890

And in his Armes he hern all up hent,
 And hem conforted in full good Entent :
 And swore his Othe, as he was true Knight
 He wolde don so ferforthly his Might
 Upon the Tyrant *Creon* hem to wreake,
 That all the People of *Grece* shulde speake
 How *Creon* was of *Theseus* yserved ;
 As he that hath his Deth full well deserved.

v. 889. *Thus when again*] There is a great Deal of what the French call *Naiveté vivace* in this Comparison, and it may be observed to the Honour of our Author, that he never fails in this Article through the the whole Work.

— servatur ad imum,
 Qualis ab incepto processerat, et fibi constat.

And

And Herd, if haply the rebellowing Grove
 Betrays a second Rival to his Love,
 Tho' from his Head and Neck the bloody Show'rs
 Distill, he recollects his scatter'd Pow'rs,
 And, ev'ry Groan suppress'd, and Wound conceal'd,
 Expatiates o'er the Mead, untaught to yield. 896

Tritonia shakes the Terrors of her Breast;
 And strait the Snakes, that form *Medusa*'s Crest,
 With hostile Hissings all at once arise,
 And at the Walls of *Cadmus* dart their Eyes. 900

Nor had th' *Athenian* Host prepar'd to go,
 When *Dirce* trembled at the Trump of Woe.

Now to the War not only those, who shar'd
 The Laurels reap'd on *Caucasus*, repair'd
 With unextinguish'd Heat, but ev'ry Plain 905
 To Combate sends a rude, unmarshall'd Train
 Beneath the Standards of their Chief convene
 The Hinds, who cultivate the Pastures green
 Of *Brauron*, and the *Pyreæan* Strand,
 Dreadful tho' firm to Seamen, when they land. 910

From *Marathon*, inur'd to martial Toils,
 Though yet unnotic'd for its *Perſian* Spoils,
 A Band arrives. with these a Cohort speeds
 From fair *Melænæ*'s ever-verdant Meads.

Then from *Icarius*' hospitable Dome, 915
 To Gods a Feasting-House, the Warriors roam,
 From *Parnes*, with a purple Harvest crown'd
Egaleos, for its fertile Groves renown'd,

v. 912. *Though yet unnotic'd*] The *Athenians* gained a great Victory here over the *Perſian* Army commanded by *Xerxes*, whose History every one is well acquainted with.

And

And *Lycabessos*, not unknown to Fame
 For Olives. — Next the stern *Ileus* came, 920
 The rough *Hymettian*, and the Swains who wreath
 The *Thyrsus* in *Acbarne's* Vales beneath.
Sunium, by eastern Prows afar perceiv'd,
 Is left, from whence the *Cretan* Ship deceiv'd
 The Sire with sable Sails, as o'er the Steep 925
 He bent, in Act to fall, and name the Deep.
 These *Salamis*, and those *Eleusis* sends,
 O'er whose rich Furrows *Ceres* wide extends
 The Scene of Plenty: on they bend their Way,
 Their Plows suspended for the dreadful Fray. 930
 Now march the Troops, whom, hardy, fierce and bold,
Calliroe's nine meandering Streams infold,
 And fair *Ilyssos*, who conceal'd with Care
 The *Thracian* Ravisher, and *Attic* Fair.
 The Citadel resigns its Guards for Fight, 935
 Where *Neptune* and *Minerva* vy'd in Might,

v. 925. *With sable Sails*] The Lot falling upon *Theseus* to go to *Crete* according to the Compact with *Minos*, he went on board a Ship, whose Sails and Tackle were black, and receiv'd this Command from his Father *Ægeus*, that if he escaped the Dangers, he should change his black Sails into white ones: but the Hero forgetting this Injunction, his Father seeing the black Sails imagin'd that his Son was dead, and cast himself headlong from the Promontory of *Sunium* into the Sea, which was afterwards call'd the *Ægean* from his Name and Destiny.

v. 933. *Who conceal'd with Care*] *Boreas* ravished *Orythia*, the Daughter of King *Erechtheus*, by whom he had the two Twins, *Zetus* and *Calais*. *Lactantius*.

v. 940. *Where Neptune and Minerva*] The Poet means the Acropolis, where the above-mentioned Deities made a Tryal of their Power. The former, by striking the Earth, caus'd a Horse to spring from it, which is the Token of War: but the latter produc'd an Olive-Tree, the Ensign of Peace.

BOOK XII. STADIUS'S THEBAID. 609

Till from the doubtful Cliff an Olive sprung,
And th' ebbing Seas with length'ning Shade o'erhung.
Nor had the *Scythian* Queen withheld her Aid ;
She join'd the Host with Ensigns high-display'd. 940
But *Theseus*, mindful of her growing Pains,
And swelling Womb, her youthful Heat restrains,
And warns her, safe at home from War's Alarms,
To deck the Nuptial-Bed with votive Arms.
Soon as the Chief surveys their martial Rage, 945
While prone to fight, and ardent to engage,
They greet their Offspring with a short Embrace,
Thus from his Car he speaks. — O gen'rous Race !
With me selected to defend the Laws
Of Nations, and assert the common Cause, 950
Exert your Pow'rs, and to the Combate rise
With Courage equal to the vast Emprise.
With us is Nature, ever faithful Guide,
The Gods, inclining to the juster Side,
And, to our View disclos'd, th' *Elysian* Band 955
In Approbation of our Conduct stand :
The Snake-hair'd Fiends the Sons of *Cadmus* head
And to the Wind their floating Banners spread.

v. 944. *To deck*] It was a Custom of the Ancients after a Victory, or when they had resign'd their military Employments, to hang up their Arms, and consecrate them. — *Horace* alludes to this Ceremony. Lib. 3. Ode 26.

Vixi puellis nuper idoneus,
Et militavi non sine Gloria :
Nunc arma, defunctumque bello
Barbiton hic paries habebit :
Lævum marinæ qui Veneris latus
Custodit. hic, hic ponite lucida
Funalia, et vectes, et arcus
Oppositis foribus minaces.

Q q

Or

On then, my Friends, to conquer or to die,
 And on the Justice of your Cause rely. 960
 The Monarch spoke, and hurl'd a sounding Lance,
 Prelude to fight, and signal to advance.
 As when the cloudy Son of *Saturn* forms
 The Winter's Reign, and vexes with his Storms
 The northern Pole, the Face of Heav'n's o'ercast, 965
 And all *Aeolia* shakes beneath the Blast,
 Whilst *Boreas*, scorning his inactive Ease,
 Acquires fresh Strength, and whistles o'er the Seas :
 Then groan the Waves and Hills, the Lightnings
 shine,
 The Thunders roar, the Clouds in Conflict join. 970
 Thus with repeated Strokes the Plains resound,
 And Wheels and Hoofs indent the smoaking Ground.
 Troop follows Troop : beneath their Feet arise
 Black Clouds of Dust, and intercept the Skies,
 Yet thro' the thick'ning Gloom by Fits is seen 975
 The transient Light of Arms, that gleams between.
 Their Javelins glare with intermingled Rays,
 And strike each other with reflected Blaze.
 Now thro' the Shades of Night they seek their Foes :
 Meanwhile a Contest emulous arose, 980
 Who first could reach the Town, and in the Wall
 Infix his Dart. Conspicuous o'er them all,

v 961. *And hurl'd a sounding Lance]* The Poet has here (as it sometimes happens with the most accurate Writers) confounded the Customs of other Countries with those of his own, in representing *Theseus* giving the Signal of War by darting a Javelin into the Frontiers of his Enemy's Country, which Ceremony was peculiar to the *Romans* only, and perform'd by their *Feciales* or *Heralds* at Arms, as we learn from *Livy*, Book 1.

Neptune's great Offspring stalks along the Field
 With haughty Strides, and waves his ample Shield,
 The sculptur'd Surface of whose Boss displays 985
 Crete's hundred Towns, the first Essay of Praise.
 Himself is there pourtray'd, as rashly brave
 Within the horrid Windings of the Cave,
 He twists the Monster's Neck, and to his Hands,
 And brawny Arms applies the strait'ning Bands, 990
 Or from his threat'ning Horns withdraws away
 His Face, and shuns with Art th' unequal Fray.
 Fear seiz'd the Theban Host, as they survey'd
 The Warrior's Image on the Targe pourtray'd;
 Such was th' Engraver's Skill, they seem'd to view 995
 A double Theseus, wet with gory Dew.
 The Hero at the Sight recalls to Mind
 His ancient Deeds, his Friends of noble Kind,
 The late-fear'd Threshold, and the Gnoissan Fair,
 Pursuing the lost Clue with busy Care. 1000

v. 989. *The Monster's Neck*] The Minotaur was half Man, half Beast, and kept in the Labyrinth made by *Dædalus*, where he devoured yearly seven of the noblest *Atbenian* Youths, till the third Year *Theseus* slew him, and escaped by the Help of *Ariadne*.

v. 995. *They seem'd to view*] *Tasso* seems to have imitated this Fiction in the last Canto of his *Jerusalem* delivered, where he tells us, that *Rinaldo*'s Motions were so sudden and rapid, that every time he brandished his Sword, his Enemies thought he brandished three.

Qual tre lingue vibrar sembra il Serpente,
 Che la prestezza d' una il persuade;
 Tal credea lui la sfigottita gente
 Con la rapida man girar tre spade
 L'occhio al moto deluso il falso crede.
 E' l terrore a que' monstri accresce fede.

Meantime the Dames, for speedy Death design'd
 By Creon's Law, their Hands fast-bound behind,
 Are from the loathsome Prison-house convey'd
 Beneath a double Guard. Both undismay'd,
 Triumphant would resign their vital Breath, 1005
 Smile at the Dagger drawn, and rush on Death,
 And dying disappoint the Tyrant's Aim ;
 When to the Court th' *Athenian Legate* came.
 An Olive's peaceful Branch indeed he bears
 But War in high insulting Tone declares ; 1010
 And mindful of his Lord's supreme Command,
 Informs the *Theban King*, that near at hand,
 His Master's Troops are station'd, and but wait
 His Answer, to commence the stern Debate.
 The Tyrant, floating in a Sea of Care, 1015
 Now doubts to persevere in Wrath, or spare,
 At length with an assur'd, embitter'd Smile
 Confirm'd he thus replies in haughty Style.
 Since then no Samples of our Ire suffice
 To make a rash, and doating People wise, 1020
 Let Self-Experience. — See ! the Foe again
 Insults our Walls. We'll meet them on the Plain.
 Let them prepare to share their Neighbour's Fate ;
 Repent they may, but they repent too late.
 This is our Law, and on these Terms we take 1025
 The Field. — While thus in angry Mood he spake,

v. 1001. *Meantime the Dames*] There is a great Similitude between this Book and the 2d of *Tasso's Jerusalem*. The Magnanimity of *Olindo* and *Sophronia* resembles that of *Antigone* and *Argia*. The former are delivered from Punishment by the Mediation of *Clorinda*, and the latter by the Interposition of the *Athenian Ambassador*. Nor is the haughty Deportment of *Phegeus* unlike that of *Argante*.

A Cloud of Dust, ascending in his Sight.
 Obscures the Day, and hides the Mountains Height.
 Impassion'd as he was, he warns his Bands
 To arm, and Armour for himself demands. 1030
 Sudden he sees (an Omen of his Fall)
 The Furies seated in the middle Hall,
Menœceus weeping his devoted Sire,
 And the glad *Argives* flaming on the Pyre.
 How fatal to the *Thebans* was the Day, 1035
 When Peace, by Blood obtain'd, was chac'd away?
 Their Weapons, scarce hung up, they now resume,
 Hack'd Shields, unable to prevent their Doom,
 Helms of their Crests bereft in Days of Yore,
 And Javelins yet distain'd with clotted Gore: 1040
 None is distinguish'd on th' embattel'd Mead
 For his neat Quiver, Sword, and well-rein'd Steed.
 No longer in the Trenches they confide:
 The City-Walls gape wide on every Side,
 No Gates, nor Bulwarks guard the Guilty Town, 1045
 By *Capaneus* dismantled, and o'erthrown.
 Nor now the heartless Youth, before they quit
 Their Wives and Children, in Embraces knit

v. 1027. *A Cloud of Dust, ascending in his Sight*] Occasioned by the March of the *Athenian* Army.

v. 1031. *And sudden sees*] To make this Fiction tolerable, we must not take the Words of the Original in a literal Sense, but suppose, that *Creon*, oppress'd with Cares and Anxiety, fell asleep, and saw these Images in a Dream; as *Richard* the third in *Shakespear* the Night before the Battel of *Bosworth* saw the Ghofts of those he had murthered, and was by them threatened with his approaching Death.

1047. *Before they quit*] The farewell Kiss was so much insisted on by the Ancients at parting from, or seeing one another again after a long Absence, that *Suetonius* informs us, *Nero* was censur'd, and look'd upon as an uncourteous brute for the Omission of it.

‘Quod

Their spreading Arms, nor the last Kiss bestow;
 E'en the craz'd Parents part without a Vow, 1050
 But when th' *Athenian* saw the solar Beam
 From bursting Clouds upon his Armour gleam,
 With headlong Fury on the Field he leaps,
 Where many an *Argive* Chief unburied sleeps:
 And, as he views the Blood-polluted Streams, 1055
 And breaths an Air condens'd by vap'ry Steams
 Beneath his dusty Helmet, at the Sight
 Enflam'd, he groans, and rushes to the Fight.
 Some Reverence at least the *Theban* shows,
 Some Honour on the *Grecians* he bestows, 1060
 As for the Fight another Plain he chose,
 Nor mingled with the Dead his living Foes.
 But, to fill up the Measure of his Guilt,
 And save the Blood, devoted to be spilt,
 A Field untill'd, and never furrow'd o'er 1065
 He singles out, to drink the hostile Gore.
 And now *Bellona* sets in adverse Arms
 Both Hosts, and shakes the Plain with War's Alarms.
 With Shouts the *Theban* Bands the Strife commence:
 But martial Trumps th' *Athenian* Troops incense. 1070
 With down-cast Looks the Sons of *Cadmus* stand,
 And feebly grasp the Weapons in their Hand;
 Their Arms yet unemploy'd, they yield their Ground,
 And shew old Scars, and many a streaming Wound.

'Quod neque adveniens, neque proficiscens, quenquam osculo im-
 'pertivit.' Life of *Nero*, Cap 37.

v. 1070. *But martial Trumps*] Euripides tells us, that *Theseus* before the Battel declar'd to either Army by an Herald, that he had no other View in this Expedition, but to have Justice done to the *Argives*, by having them buried in a decent proper Manner; and that *Creon* made no Answer to this Declaration. *Barthius.*

Nor

Nor in th' *Athenian* Chieftains as before 1075
 The Thirst of Vengeance glows; their Threats are o'er,
 And, unoppos'd, their Courage dies away.
 Thus, when the yielding Woods decline the Fray,
 The Winds grow placid; and the Waves subside,
 If no firm Shore repells the briny Tide. 1080
 But as the Son of *Ægeus* high display'd
 The Spear of *Marathonian* Oak, whose Shade
 O'erhangs the Foe, whilst dreadful to the Sight,
 Its steely Point emits a beamy Light.
 His Foes pale Horror urges from behind, 1085
 And wings them with the Fleetness of the Wind.
 As when from *Hæmus* *Mars* impells his Car,
 And scatters Havock from the Wheels of War,

v. 1087. *As when from Hæmus*] *Statius* by this Comparison sets the Valour of *Theseus* in a very exalted Light. He is no less formidable than *Mars* himself. We look upon him, as more than human, and are not astonished so much at the Effects of his Prowess. The first Hint of comparing Heroes to the Gods was *Homer's*, who in his *Iliad* likens *Idomeneus* to this same Deity.

Lib. 13. Verse 298.

Οῖος δὲ βροτολογὸς Ἀρης πόλεμονδε μέτεισι.
 Τῷ δὲ φόσθ φίλῳ ψιος ἄμφι προπέρος καὶ ἀπαρόν.
 Επειτι, δε εφόσθητε παλάφρονά περ πολεμισήν.

Virgil has enlarg'd on this Simile, and thrown in several beautiful Images. *Æneid*, Book the 12. V. 331.

Qualis apud gelidi cum flumina concitus Hebri
 Sanguineus Mavors clypeo increpat, atque furentes
 Bella movens immittit Equos: illi æquore aperto
 Ante Notos Zephyrumque volant: gemit ultima pulsu
 Thraca pedum: circumque atræ Formidinis ora,
 Iræque, Insidiæque, Dei comitatus, aguntur.

Silius Italicus has likewise imitated it in his *Punic War*, Book 1.

Quantus Bistonijis latè Gradivus in oris
 Belligero rapitur curru, telumque coruscans
 Titanum quo pulsa cohors, flagrantia bella
 Cornipedum afflato domat, et stridoribus axis

Before

Before him Carnage, Rout, Disorder fly,
His Harbingers, and all or kill or die. 1090
But *Theseus* scorns to stain with vulgar Gore
His Sword. The flying Herd he passes o'er,
To weaker Hands such easy Conquests yields,
And scours, in quest of nobler Game, the Fields.
Thus Dogs and Wolves invade the ready Prey, 1095
While the more gen'rous Lion stalks away.
Yet *Thamirus* and bold *Olenius* too,
Presuming to contend in Arms, he flew;
This, as he lifts a Stone, in Act to throw,
That, as he fits his Arrow to his Bow, 1100
Then fell three Sons of *Alceus* side by Side,
Whilst in their Strength united they confide.
Pierc'd by three Spears: first, wounded in his Breast,
Rash *Phileus* sought the Shades of endless Rest,
Next, the Lance piercing thro' the Shoulder-Joint,
Japix dies, last *Helops* bit the Point. 1106
Now *Hæmon* in his Car he sought: his Blade,
Wav'd round, in Air a dazzling Circle made:
But he retires. — The Spear with whizzing Sound
Two Chiefs transfix'd with one continu'd Wound,
And aim'd a third, but th' Axe-tree withstood, 1111
And lodg'd the Dart, deep-buried in the Wood.
But *Creon* only thro' the Ranks of Fight
He seeks, and challenges to prove his Might:
The Tyrant in the Van, tho' far apart, 1115
He soon espies, whilst using ev'ry Art,
To dare th' Attack he reincites his Band,
And makes the last Effort: him, by Command

v. 1118. *Him by Command*] Our Author seems to have taken this Circumstance from Virgil's *Aeneid*, Lib. 12. Verse 758.

Of *Theseus*, his retiring Troops resign
To his own Valour, and the Pow'rs divine. 1120
The King recalls them, but, when he descry'd
Himself alike abhor'd by either Side,
Bold with Despair, his utmost Rage collects,
And thus to *Theseus* his Discourse directs.
Think not, thou comest here a War to wage 1125
With *Amazons*, or wreak thy female Rage
On female Foes. — Thou meet'st with manly Arms,
Chiefs old in War, and nurs'd amidst Alarms;
Beneath whose Might *Hippomedon* was slain,
And *Capaneus*, and *Tydeus* press'd the Plain. 1130
What Phrenzy prompts thee thus to tempt thy Fate?
See, in whose Cause thou kindlest the Debate!
He spoke, and at the Foe a Javelin flings,
Faint on the Surface of the Shield it rings.
But *Theseus*, smiling at the feeble Blow 1135
Shakes his enormous Lance, in Act to throw,
But, ere he lets th' impatient Weapon fly,
In thund'ring Accents makes this stern Reply.

Ille simul fugiens, Rutulos simul increpat omnes,
Nomine quemque vocans; notumque efflagitat ensem.
Æneas mortem contra præsensque minatur
Exitium, si quisquam adeat; terretque trementes
Excisurum urbem minitans: —

v. 1125. *Think not,*] *Numanus* in the 9th Book of the *Æneid*
insults the *Trojans* in almost the same Strain.

Quis Deus Italianam, quæ vos dementia adegit?
Non hic Atridæ: nec fandi sutor Ulysses:

Creon however, in the Heat of his Passion, transgresses the Bounds
of Truth, and very ungratefully forgets his Deliverer, in attri-
buting the Death of *Capaneus* to a mortal Hand.

Ye Grecian Shades, to whom *Aegides* sends
 This Sacrifice, prepare the vengeful Fiends 1140
 For his Reception, and unbar the Domes
 Of *Tartarus*: He comes, the Tyrant comes.
 He said, with Force dismiss'd, the quiv'ring Dart
 Pervades the Skies, and lights, where near his Heart
 The slender Chains, well-wrought of ductile Gold,
 The Cuirass, arm'd with many a Plate infold. 1146
 The Blood spins upward from a thousand Holes:
 He sinks, and, doubting where to fix them, rolls
 His Eyes around. — The Victor stands beside
 To spoil his Arms, and thus insulting cry'd. 1150
 Now wilt thou rev'rence Justice, nor disdain
 To grant Interment to the *Grecians* slain?
 Go, meet the Vengeance, thy Demerits claim,
 Secure howe'er of the last fun'ral Flame.

v. 1151. *Now wilt thou rev'rence Justice*] It may be worth while to compare the Conduct of *Theseus* with that of *Achilles* on a similar Occasion. The former, we see, when *Creon* was just dying, only upbraids him of his Cruelty in a gentle Manner, and with great Humanity promises him, he shall not want the funeral-Rites, which he deny'd to others. Whilst the latter, as it were to sharpen and embitter the Agonies of Death, with the utmost Ferocity threatens *Hector*, that no Motives shall ever prevail with him to suffer his Body to be buried. — Here *Homer* has outrag'd Nature, and not represented his Hero, as a Man, but a Monster. And yet Mr. *Pope*, in the Preface to his Version, after having prais'd his Author's Talent for drawing Characters, and his Lessons of Morality, remarks of *Statius's* Heroes, that an Air of Impetuosity runs through them all; the same horrid and savage Courage appears in his *Capaneus*, *Tydeus* and *Hippomedon*. They have a Parity of Character (says he) which makes them seem Brothers of one Family. — — This Observation may suffice to shew the Reader, to what Lengths a Predilection for his Author will carry a Translator.

With

With pious Tumult now both Hosts embrace, 1155
 Join Hand in Hand, and mingle Face with Face.

Peace and a League the Sons of *Thebes* request;
 And, hailing *Theseus* by the Name of Guest,
 Court him to march his Army to the Town,
 And use the royal Mansion as his own. 1160

The Chief assents. The *Theban* Dames rejoice,
 And greet his Entrance with applauding Voice.
 Thus did the Banks of *Ganges* once resound
 The Victor's Praise, with Wreaths of Vine-leaves crown'd.

Now from the Summit of the fronting Hill, 1165
 Whose shady Groves o'erhang the sacred Rill
 Of *Dirce*, the *Pelasgian* Dames descend,
 And with shrill Shouts the vaulted *Æther* rend.

Thus, when the frantic Choir of Matrons join
 With hideous Yell the jolly God of Wine 1170
 They rage and foam, as if they had decreed
 To do, or late had done some flagrant Deed.
 Far other Tears gush forth, the Tears of Joy,
 And various Objects their Pursuit employ.

To *Theseus* these, to *Creon* those repair, 1175
 Whilst others make the Dead their earliest Care.
 Scarce could I dignify their Woes in Verse,
 And all the Pomp in equal Strains rehearse,
 Should gentle *Phæbus* fortify my Lungs,
 And give Locution from a hundred Tongues. 1180

v. 1179. *Should gentle Phæbus]* Our Author has imitated this
 from *Homer*, Book 2d, Verse 488.

Πληγὴν δὲ τὸν ἄγαν μυθίσσομα, τὸν ὄνομαν
 Οὐδὲ μοι δίκαιο μὲν γλῶσσα, δίκαια δὲ σοματίαι,
 Φωνὴ δὲ ἄρρητθε, χάλκεον δὲ μοι ἡτορεύει.

Nor is he singular in his Imitation.

Non

To sing, with what a Bound and placid Smile
Evadne leap'd upon the fun'ral Pile,
 And, folding in her Arms her Husband's Corse,
 Explor'd the Traces of the Lightning's Force ;
 How his fair Spouse with Kisses stamps the Face 1185
 Of cruel *Tydeus*, clasp'd in her Embrace ;
 Or to her Sister with fast-streaming Eyes
Argia tells the former Night's Emprise ;
 With what loud Shrieks th' *Arcadian* Queen demands
 Her Son, bewail'd by all his subject Bands, 1190
 Her Son, whose Beauty fled not with his Breath ;
 Her Son, esteem'd in Life, and wept in Death.
 For such a mighty Task the new Supplies
 Of some inspiring God would scarce suffice.

Non, mihi si linguæ centum fint, oraque centum,
 Ferrea Vox, omnes scelerum comprehendere formas,
 Omnia pœnarum percurrere nomina possum.

Virg. Aen. L. 6.

Tasso has also borrow'd the Thought, *Jerusalem* deliver'd it. Can. 9.
 Stan. 92.

Non io, secento bocche, e lingue cento
 Aveſſi, e ferrea Lena, e ferrea voce,
 Narrar potrei quel numero, che ſpentò
 Ne' primi affalti hâ quel drappel feroce.

1182. *Evadne leap'd upon the fun'ral Pile*] This Heroine threw herself upon the Pile of her Husband *Capaneus*, and was burnt with him. There are equal Instances of Affection amongst the eastern Nations of our Time, and *Montaigne* acquaints us, that it is a Custom in some Parts of *India*, whenever their Prince dies, to burn his most beloved Concubine on the same Pile with him.

v. 1191. *Her Son*] This Repetition of the Hero's Name three times leaves a great Impression of him on the Mind of the Reader, and is so very beautiful, that I thought myſelf oblig'd to preserve it in the Translation. *Homer* has one equally delicate.

Νιρεὺς δ' αὐτὸς Σύμμητεν ἄγεν τρεῖς νῆματα ἔισθει,
 Νιρεὺς Ἀγλαῖνος ὁ Θεός, χαροπότοιο τὸν ἄνθετον,
 Νιρεὺς, ὃς κακίστος ἀνὴρ νερὸν Ιλιον ἔλθει.

Yet

Yet more. — My Ship, long tost upon the Seas, 1195
 Requires a Port, and Interval of Ease.

O *Thebaid*, dear Object of my Toil,
 For twelve long Years pursu'd by Midnight Oil !
 Wilt thou survive thy Author, and be read,
 His Lamp of Life extinct, his Spirit fled ? 1200
 For thee already Fame has pav'd the Way
 To future Praise, and cherishes thy Lay.
 Taste stamps thee current, marks thee for her own,
 And makes thy few Deserts, and Beauties known
 To gen'rous *Cæsar*, whilst the studious Youth 1205
 From thy chaste Page imbibes the moral Truth
 With Fiction temper'd. —— Claim thy proper Bays,
 Nor emulate the greater *Æneid*'s Praise ;
 At awful Distance follow, and adore
 Its sacred Footsteps : thus, the Tempest o'er, 1210
 Through Envy's Cloud distinguish'd, thou shalt shine,
 And after me enjoy a Name divine.

1197. O *Thebaid*] The Poet in this Address very artfully takes his Leave of the Reader, and at the same time sings his own Panegyric, which he has done in a decent modest Manner, and paid a genteel Compliment to the Author of the *Æneid*. In this Self-Notice he has the Authority of *Pindar*, *Lucretius*, *Ovid* and *Lucan*, who have all given him Precedents.

F I N I S.



